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ON BEING A PHILOSOPHER[1]

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IN a very famous analysis and panegyric of the philosopher, Plato claimed that he is a man magnificent in mind and the spectator of all time and all existence. These are great words, and words made venerable by ancient repute and centuries of citation. Unfortunately, however, like many such utterances they can only be regarded as hyperbolic and rhetorical; and in an age that, failing in inspiration and fecundity of intuition, seeks at least to be precise, thay must suffer limitation. For the *lumen siccum* of reason shows that the phrase "all time" involves a contradiction, and that the human mind, by nature limited both in amplitude and in profundity, cannot apprehend "all existence". That is a beatitude reserved for the creative intellect of Nature, where time gives place to eternity, and existence to essence: for time as an indefinite can only be summated by being consummated.

More restrained, and thus more easily defensible, though less impressive, is that other saying of Plato, that the philosopher claims to be not the possessor of wisdom, but only her lover: and that he endlessly pursues the beloved, enjoying only the rapture of pursuit, and never the beatitude of possession. But if the former claim was too magniloquent, the latter is far too slight; for it is not only the philosopher that seeks knowledge, but every man is so constituted as to pursue it in his own way and with his own special limitations. To live as a conscious being *is* to pursue knowledge, just as to live as an organic being is to develop vigilant response to an ever widening environment. So it would appear that for Plato in one

[1] Lecture delivered at the Evening Meeting of the Institute on October 13, 1936.

of his moods we are all philosophers, while in another none of us can possibly be one.

It is not my business to-night to defend Plato against the censure invited by this seeming contradiction. We need not be just to famous men: they are as kings not to be moved or removed by the judgments of lesser men. Fellow-servants with the swans, they may be relegated to pigeon-holes; mouths that were filled with honey may be choked with the dust of commentators. But before we turn aside from Plato to meditations more in the idiom of our own epoch, let us glance at yet another picture of the philosophic life from the same great dialogue: *The Republic*. I do so because it brings us a step nearer to what I want chiefly to emphasize this evening. In the July issue of the *Journal* of this Institute, Dr M. B. Foster of Christ Church drew attention to a certain double standard of philosophic activity in Plato's account of the Cave. "In the *Republic*", he said, "all the acts in the life of a Guardian up to the point at which he is bidden to return to the cave are . . . determined as right or wrong according as they are or are not means to his highest good, which is the achievement of the best life. But the command to return to the cave both is and is clearly recognized to be a command to surrender a better life for a worse one. If this act therefore is right, it is right in a different sense from that of conducing to his highest good."[1] With Dr Foster's description of this second standard as a Platonic anticipation of Christian "revelation" I have neither concern nor sympathy: the interest for me lies in Plato's admission that the proper life for the philosopher is not the unmoved contemplation of all time and all existence, but a philosophic concern with the affairs of humanity; that the philosopher is not a God-fainéant but an active man, and his philosophy not an absorption in a mirage of totality, but an illumination and guidance of human life and feeling. No longer is the philosopher portrayed as the indifferent and rapt spectator of eternal essences far removed from the crudities of finite experience; no longer is he merely the learner, the seeker after knowledge; he is the man of ripe experience and godlike amplitude of vision, applying his principles to the affairs of human life: a man doing a man's work and finding his proper function therein, but doing it with insight and illumination, and thus doing it easily, intelligently, freely.

Now it is here, I think, that we find the most essential attributes of the philosophic life: its ease, its intelligence, its freedom; and with these as their essential condition its humanity, or to speak more broadly and more accurately its *sense of the finite*. Plato, indeed, seems to suggest that in this return to the Cave the philo-

[1] *Philosophy*, vol. xi, pp. 301–2.

sopher, in the words of Dr Foster, surrenders "a better life for a worse one", but I shall say that he surrenders what never could be his, and that his best life is to be found in the Cave, but unchained and able to distinguish the shadows from the puppets, and the fire from the sun.

Far be it from me to minimize the importance in the philosophic life of the pursuit of ultimate truth, for this is the essential prerequisite of all properly philosophic activity and poise. I do not even think that perfect knowledge is for man an absolutely unattainable ideal. On the contrary, knowledge that is not in some sense perfect is not rightly called "knowledge" at all. It is because I have recognized this that I have sometimes risked the censure of my friends by drawing a distinction between knowledge *qua* knowledge and knowledge *qua* human, by which I mean, not that human knowledge is distinguished from the knowledge of other beings in its general character of relation to the Real (for I have called it human *knowledge* and not opinion or faith or some other mode of the apprehension of objects), but by its special conditions arising from the place held by man within the Real. It is by reason of the variety of these conditions that every man's knowledge is peculiar to himself, and in fact constitutes his individual mind. Indeed, I only speak of human knowledge as distinct from the knowledge of individual men, because over considerable areas of humanity one species of conditions appears to prevail. But even this community must not be exaggerated: we must not overemphasize the importance of man's biological nature, for men are more alike in their superficial and anatomical contours and structure than in their mental characteristics. If the minds and hearts of all men became visible, what a jungle would human society appear!

My first point, then, is that the common, almost unconscious, assumption that there is a single unidimensional totum of knowledge about the Real, into which this or that man makes peripheral and temporary and fluctuating inroads, or which he inaccurately reiterates, so that his knowledge is only affected by his special status in the Real in so far as it never covers the whole ground,—this does not represent the essential situation. For though in the end there is, of course, only one system of knowledge in which all the individual systems of knowledge that constitute the individual minds of conscious beings find their undiminished place, yet that hierarchical system in its wholeness and synthesis constitutes only the conscious Real itself, and is thus probably not knowledge in the term's usual sense at all, but creative intelligence. Human thought does not merely rethink sections of the Divine Thought (to use the metaphor of Kepler), but holds its subordinate place in that Thought. Thus the epistemological situation is ruled by the

unique status of the individual knower within the system of the Real, a status through which each is cut off from full knowledge of Nature, and yet is able to know it as it is, in his own degree and manner: that is, in the relative dissolution proper to the individual's level of synthesis and scope.[1]

Something ought, perhaps, to be said by way of explanation of the apparent paradox that though there are many real individual minds with their many congruent real worlds of nature, there is yet but one indivisible Real which they express and partly constitute. This is a subject on which I have already so often written and spoken that I am a little shy of introducing it again to-night. Perhaps I can rapidly sketch the principles that lie at its basis: my excuse must be my judgment of its transcendent importance for the philosophic world-view. It is, indeed, as it seems to me, the great master-key to ultimate problems in many branches of philosophy; and it is certainly the basis of all I have to say to-night about the philosophic attitude to life and its problems. My hesitancy has not, I hope, prepared you for a principle remote and recondite, for it is neither; difficult as it may be, and is, in its precise formulation, baffling in its detailed analysis, in its broad outline it is extremely simple and even naïve. Yet it yields the essential solvent of many of the baffling antinomies that have obstructed philosophic speculation.

I refer to the macrocosm-microcosm structure of the Real, by the imputation of which it becomes possible to maintain the unity and indivisibility of Nature and also the reality of the finite individuals within it. The root-conception is that of an hierarchical structure in descending order from the creative One through the various stages of analysis and abstraction, giving rise to the false appearance of partition, down to the finest dust bordering on non-being. The principle of individuation is thus not subdivision but the emanation of infinite microcosms from the macrocosm, each in its own proper degree and abstraction reproducing the structure of its concrete source. And each of these infinite microcosms is itself a macrocosm in relation to infinite secondary microcosms; and so to infinity. These microcosms and microcosms of microcosms in their hierarchical order are the real individuals constituting the world of nature. In the most complete sense no one of them is a perfect individual, for only the original macrocosm can be so described: they are approximations to that perfection in infinitely various degrees and modes. And their imperfection implies their

[1] But this, too, involves some apprehension of the structure and content of the absolute Real, though an abstract one that can only be filled out *a posteriori*.

degradation from the eternal poise of Nature to the instability of temporal process: they become and cease to be in a time-series.

Further, in addition to the real individuals of various degrees of perfection, there are also seeming individuals that reproduce, not their single macrocosm but factors and elements derived from several relative macrocosms, and thus appear in their time-series as formed from the more or less external aggregation and relation of real individuals. These seeming individuals, which are of all grades and removes of defect, are real in their elements rather than in their totalities, and find their explanation through processes of scientific analysis rather than by philosophical synthesis. As an intellectual discipline, it seems to me, philosophy is the elaboration in precise detail of such an hierarchical system of forms, and the attribution of empirical entities to their proper place therein. It is this that distinguishes it from science in its characteristic forms: the ideal objects for scientific investigation are, in fact, just those seeming individuals or aggregations of real or seeming individuals, that are real in their elements rather than in their totalities; because its method is analytical, and thus destructive of totality or wholeness. When scientific analysis is applied to real wholes or individuals its result is apt to be unsatisfactory, except when the analyst is himself philosophic and uses his method sceptically.

It is not, however, my business to-night to discuss the nature of science; let me next comment very briefly upon another important set of problems that, I think, find their only solution through recourse to some such principles of unity and individuation as those I have sketched. Again and again down the long history of philosophical inquiry and speculation great thinkers have arisen to recall vainglorious apriorism and unchecked dogmatism to the consideration of the limitation of human faculty, and the necessity of coming to terms with it in the elaboration of philosophical system. The names that come most readily to mind are the Bacons, Roger and Francis, John Locke, and Immanuel Kant. Again and again the would-be "spectator of all time and all existence" has had to be reminded that it is necessary to subject his visive faculties, his instruments, and his observatory to close inspection before, or while, making use of them to sweep the intellectual heavens. It was at one of the greatest points of philosophical development that Kant, having called a halt to both dogmatism and scepticism, made his famous distinction between the world of reality and the world of objective appearances, noumena and phenomena he called them, the world of freedom and the world of causal necessity. Not, I would remind you, that these were two separate and wholly unrelated worlds, for the former was the source of the causal necessity of the latter, while the latter suffered violence by the irruption of the

former in the sphere of human morality. When man is morally free, natural causes are moulded to the dictates of his noumenal will. This distinction of two worlds, and the recognition of the strain that exists between them, is the inevitable source of an ethical dualism such as has once again been emphasized in recent ethical thought: I mean the distinction, not merely between an immediate and an ultimate good, but more especially between that ultimate good and the morally right. We saw the introduction of this distinction by Plato in his account of the philosopher-ruler; it was quite central for Kant. A man is truly free only when he pursues the morally right, for when he pursues his own good he does so upon inclination, even when it is his ultimate good pursued upon a postponed inclination, for then reason is operating as no more than the servant of inclination—not as a universal legislator, which is the sole condition of genuine freedom.

These matters have been disputed often enough both as regards the ontological dualism of phenomena and noumena, and also the ethical dualism of right and good: the weight of the argument ever tending towards its resolution, and the weight of human experience towards its maintenance. Dr Foster's attempt to put the moral dualism past argument by tracing the incidence of the right to "revelation", and its appearance in Plato as a sort of "Christianity before Christ", does not seem to me to be very helpful or likely to impress his philosophical readers: "Even the Holy One of the Gospels", says Kant in a not unrelated connection, "must first be compared with our ideal of moral perfection before we can recognize Him as such."[1] But I fear that Kant too, when one comes to consider the ultimate unity and coherence of his ontology and morals, is equally lacking in principles to commend them to the reason and intellectual conscience. And it is because this is so that we find Hegel roundly rejecting the dualistic conclusions, and thus restoring the self-respect of the philosopher as a rational thinker at the expense of the philosopher as a humanist. But philosophy must solve this dualism in the philosopher's own soul, and explain the connection between the uncurbed intellect of all philosophic dreams and the mirage-haunted intelligence of the philosophic man, half blinded by the dust of time, sketching his map of the desert of finitude as he makes his way towards the oasis of vision where he would be. Plato, as we have seen, in his more optimistic mood spoke of the emergence of the philosophic soul from its Cave up the steep and rugged ascent into the blinding presence of the sun itself, and of its gradual acclimatization to that ethereal world of pure forms; and Francis Bacon, taking the figure of Plato and transferring its incidence, thought of the *eidola specus*,

[1] *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, p. 31.

and even of the *eidola tribus* that more properly corresponds to Plato's image, as serious but yet corrigible failings of human faculty. Far indeed be it from me to suggest that these great minds were wholly wrong in their supreme optimism, or that the human mind has no way out to the infinite and perfect; but this perfection coupled with this imperfection is precisely the dualism that philosophy must face and resolve.

It is because the macrocosm-microcosm theory of Nature offers us a credible clue out of this labyrinth, and also answers to many of the apparent facts of our experience, that I believe it to be the root-principle of all philosophy, capable of affording us guidance in dealing with the special limitations that determine human finiteness, and thus in laying down some of the typical reactions to human experience that may be expected from the philosopher as humanist, as the man with the true sense of the finite.

How then does philosophy transform the life of a finite individual? I put the question in this form in order to emphasize the exoteric nature of philosophy. A man does not need to be qualified to be a professional teacher of philosophy in order to be a philosopher: on the contrary, many professors of philosophy of unimpeachable scholarship have been far from philosophic. Any man can live his life in a philosophic spirit if he is so happy as to possess the right intellectual temperament. Doubtless the deeper his insight into the nature of things, the more effective will be his application of philosophic principles to the detail-impediments and issues of human destiny, but philosophers are not limited to those possessing "a good honours degree in philosophy", as the phrase goes. Socrates knew very little if we may believe his own estimate (as in some degree we may)—he knew that he knew nothing at all, but he was a philosopher in a supreme degree; not because he went about asking questions, but because he lived an ordinary human life, yet with that ease, that freedom, that intelligence, that true sense of the finite of which I have spoken. Knowledge is only of importance as it ministers to that.

What then is the philosophic attitude to life? What is it to be a philosopher? It is, I have said, rightly to recognize the nature of the finite and temporal and its relation to the infinite and eternal; rightly to distinguish the eternal finite from the transitory, and to understand the precise degree of the temporality of the temporal. And this is what I mean by a right sense of the finite. Let me elaborate this for a little:

Two main modes of limitation may be distinguished (though not symmetrically separated): (*a*) there is the *partiality* that characterizes every finite individual: it is never self-contained, self-subsistent, or independent, but always finds itself opposed by an

environment against which it struggles with greater or less success, and by means of which it sustains its temporal life.

(*b*) There is the *multiplicity* that characterizes most of the finite entities of our experience: the physical things, both organic and inorganic, as well as the social entities which we ourselves partly constitute: the family, the state, the species.

I need not stop to discuss the precise relations of these two modes of limitation which correspond to the two directions in which individuality may vary in perfection, viz. in comprehensiveness and in coherence; it is sufficient to say that I shall make them serve to distinguish two main directions in which the philosophic spirit expresses itself in human life: the individual and the social. To be a philosopher implies a right sense of the finite in respect to both of these modes or directions of limitation. Let me consider them *seriatim*:

(*a*) *Human partiality.*

Here we can fruitfully make a further distinction between two senses in which the individual may be said to be limited, viz. as a microcosm of Nature, and as distributed over a duration so that at any moment it is only a part of its own total being.

Let me take these topics separately, though they are in themselves very closely related:

(i) That the finite individual is a microcosm of Nature, both as an extended being and as a conscious mind, implies defect as well as relative perfection, implies in fact, as I have sometimes tried to show, partial descent into time: birth, and death, and vicissitude. What in the macrocosm is eternal poise, in the microcosm is degraded into contrary and even mutually negating affections, the negation finding mitigation and solution only by the expansion of a time-dimension, and the consequent introduction of division within the seamless fabric of the Real. Thus we have passage in time; we were born in season or out of season, we live at issue with our contemporaries, enjoy a brief period of fruition, we age, we wilt, friends fail us in our need, while

> some we loved, the loveliest and the best
> That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
> Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
> And one by one crept silently to rest.

And here surely there is place for philosophy if the heart will let the intelligence speak and not turn its brave words to idleness. Birth and death we may well take as the final symbols of human limitation, and as thus constituting the crucial test of the quality of the philosopher's sense of the finite. He will not, I think, attempt the

ways of popular superstition, or put his faith in ancient or in modern creeds that will not stand the test of objective intellectual criticism. These are fashioned out of ignorance and propagated under the insignia of bondage. A pre-existence that can be no more than a barren hypothesis; an immortality that no man can really desire, or could support, and is no more than the shadow of the unvanquished sense of life in those who are not in the act of dying: these constitute no true sense of human finitude in its relation with the infinite. For pre-existence and immortality yield no true conquest of time, they represent rather the triumph of time. We need not offer the unborn and the dead more time in which to conquer time: the unborn are not under its dominion, and the dead have already escaped from it. They have "turned the bane to antidote", and added that touch of finality that eternalizes time. It is at least as certain that the dead are dead as that the unborn are unborn; in this world, in this time, they are not.

It has often been supposed that for the philosopher who thus rejects such self-contradictory superstitions nothing remains but the cultivation of indifference. Of death do we not often say, "Time cures all", and of life that is not yet, "Live in the moment"? When we do so we look to the mere lapse of time to make good time's thefts, to the mere oblivion of time to offset time's evil gifts. But this is no longer time's secret victory over the human spirit, it is the triumph of time *sans phrase*; and whatever value it may have for those whose reaction to experience is wholly affective, who can reach equanimity only by exhaustion or by vacuity, it is certainly not the genuine philosophic attitude: it is based upon no true sense of the finite, it involves no steady contemplation of our limitations, no free intelligence, no genuine humanity.

If then the way of philosophy is neither the way of superstition nor that of indifference, it must be the way of intellectual insight. It leads the mind to the contemplation of the very sources of the time that measures our finitude, to the knowledge that in the eternity of which time is a degradation necessitated by our partiality all that is of worth in our temporal experience is real but transformed, "awakened from the dream of life"—"made one with Nature". The philosopher triumphs over time by looking past it into its eternal source. That these are fine words and sometimes nothing more for even the most philosophical of men shows only the reality of our finiteness, and adds tragic import to life and death; but in so far as they have real weight in our estimate of temporal vicissitude they express, I think, the essence of the *religion* of the philosopher.

(ii) But, as I have suggested, the partiality of the finite individual as he develops in the time-series is even more abrupt than I have so far considered in what I have said about his microcosmic nature.

For the true microcosm is not the temporary individual of this or that moment or epoch of his temporal development, but the total individual occupying his complete duration whether temporal or eternal. Thus the individual of this or that moment or period is a part only of his true and total finite self, which again is but a microcosm of extended and conscious Nature. And this partial divorce of the individual from himself that is involved in his occupation of a time-order is again a source of disunion and problem in human life; it is in fact the root of *moral obligation* and struggle. I have already commented upon the distinctions that have been drawn between the immediate good, the ultimate good, and the morally right, all of which make their specific calls on human conduct, and but rarely coincide in their demands. I shall say in this connection that the immediate good is something determined by the character of the individual taken as complete in the present; the ultimate good—a much more vaguely determined end—by the character of a foreseen individual of an enduring future taken as the real moral individual; the morally right answers to the real total individual, the microcosm of Nature, legislating more or less abstractly for the temporal truncated individual for whom morality has thus a strangely compelling import. The often attempted reduction of the morally right to the ultimately good must, it seems to me, be resisted. I do not, of course, think that it can be argued that morality is "eternal and immutable", to use the epithets of Cudworth, that morality as it urges the individual and provides the cutting edge of progress is, in the idiom of Kant, the formulation of absolutely pure practical reason; but neither do I think that it can be reduced to ultimate expediency. It has always been difficult to defend the Kantian view of a categorical imperative valid for all rational beings. Its universality seemed wholly dependent on its vacuity, for as soon as specific matter was introduced into it in the formation of a moral maxim applicable to actual practice, its sphere of application became correspondingly confined. "Act only on the maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law" gives only the empty form of morality to which no universal filling could conceivably be given. If a particular maxim is to be used as a universal law it can only be defended by the inclusion within the maxim of the strict conditions of its application. "Thou shalt not lie" cannot be universalized as it stands unless the term "lie" already implies its restriction to morally indefensible deviations from strict and complete correspondence with fact. If it does not, then the maxim can only be universalized by the distinct inclusion within it of the conditions under which lying is condemned. And these can never be completed. No reasonable moralist could either tolerate universal lying or condemn lying universally;

morality lies in an infinitely fine adjustment of an abstract imperative with a concrete need. Moral principle requires, in fact, not exceptions in favour of this or that individual at this or that time, but exceptions in favour of certain specified classes of individual faced by certain specified classes of situation. Moral flexibility does not imply individual laxity; on the contrary it involves "fundamental brain-work", and morality, from being the more or less mechanical universalization of traditional moral maxims, becomes the aspiration of the truncated temporal agent after his full eternal reality.

For the philosopher, then, there is no action that can in itself be called moral or immoral universally, that is, under any and every circumstance; yet there is a right that transcends his immediate, and even his supposed ultimate advantage. His reaction to morals, therefore, is chiefly characterized by a sceptical attitude towards popular moral maxims, not because they are too difficult, too stringent, but because, like book-rules for making a good golf swing, they are too simple and general, too abstract, rigid, and ill directed; thus also by a natural inversion they come to be either too loosely or too zealously applied and too hypocritically professed. The greater part of popular morality as it vaguely occupies the human mind is a mass of taboo, prejudice, loose tradition, and use and wont; and though for the last-named there is, and perhaps always will be, some defence where human intelligence is limited in depth, and human foresight in scope, for primitive taboo, shallow-pated prejudice, and ignorant zeal, the philosopher has no toleration. For they are, with superstition, the main tools with which mankind has plagued and scared itself all up the ages.

Furthermore, the philosopher will be specially sceptical about such moral maxims as are plainly directed towards the special needs of society and political order, and are aimed at moulding the individual into conformity with this or that prevailing form of social order or political institution. For this reverses the proper order of precedence, the conscious individual being the real microcosm of Nature, while social and political entities are but the derivatives of their members. Morality is primarily individual; indeed, it is social only because it is primarily individual.

This reference to society and the State leads me very naturally to the second main type of limitation that I distinguished in re lation to which the philosopher's sense of the finite is significant:

(*b*) *The multiplicity of prevailing individual entities.*

By this I mean not that there are many such individuals and types of individual (for they are infinite), but that each of the many,

or perhaps I should say, many of the eaches, are individually multiplex, imperfectly unified, and thus lacking in coherence or rationality. What will be the attitude of the philosopher towards these intrinsically irrational entities?

If, as I have said, the philosopher's sense of the finite leads him within the sphere of religion to eschew superstition on the one hand and indifference on the other, and to look for a solution to the problems raised by his microcosmic limitations to the eternalization of the values appearing in time, and thus to the knowledge that no empirical value can be derived or destroyed by the mere lapse of time; and if within the sphere of morality he puts aside taboo, conformity, and puritanism on the one hand, and on the other, philistinism and licence, and pursues only that infinitely fine adjustment of actions to the unique needs of this or that moral situation that is prompted by his own essential aspiration after his eternal character as a microcosm of the Real; his attitude towards the multiplex totalities that masquerade as microcosms of Nature is, I think, likely to be determined by an inverse correction. Take, for crucial example, his relation to social units or complexes, or political wholes—those seeming microcosms that so profoundly affect human life. That they are not true microcosms of Nature is sufficiently indicated by their lack of central consciousness. Even that most unified and perfect of social wholes, "the marriage of true minds" that does not "admit impediments", certainly retains that last impediment of separate consciousnesses. I do not at the moment discuss whether this is an imperfection to love, or whether its essential perfection is not out of impediment to fashion a new perfection. My point is that society does not even at its best constitute a true unity or microcosm, though it is the result of a well-founded effort of the finite individuals to pass beyond their limitations. In its more multiplex forms society recedes towards complete disunion. Somewhere between these limits of love and war there is the social and political world in which unity means ideally the mutuality and division of function of the well-knit society of free minds, but too often actually only the antagonism, subjectivism, and irresponsiveness of a mere congeries of geographically juxtaposed individuals, or the suppressed antagonism of a mass of slaves held together only by the will and power of a tyrant. But in no case has a society a unity comparable with that of the individual member, so that any theory that makes the State a foreshadowing of the Absolute, however inspiring it may be for the social reformer, is necessarily misleading in its scale of values. Society at its best is still a compromise between divergent individual wills, based, it is true, upon a general unity of type, and enforced by the common interest in self-preservation and improvement. The primary thing

is not the perfection of the society, but individual needs, and freedom as the condition of their satisfaction.

It is by reason of this primacy of the individual that the philosopher's attitude to social and political organization and morality is marked by scepticism and a certain indifference, rather than by constructive imagination and the utopianism of smug conservatism or zealous reform. The philosopher with his sense of the finite has no belief in the perfect society, in the conscious reconstruction of social life, in the elaboration of principles of political organization, or the speculations of the reformer. He knows that a perfect whole must necessarily be prior to its parts, whereas in society it is *ex hypothesi* posterior to them. Do not mistake me, I am not arguing against social life and organization, but against the exaggeration of its possible perfection, and of the power of the human mind to lay down its principles. Even in love, that simple and nearly perfect society, there is need, as our Chairman Professor Macmurray has maintained, to adopt an objective attitude, and, I would add, an experimental attitude, to achieve the highest values.

Society is by nature a compromise, a compromise that aims at, and sometimes produces the good of the individual members. Man, we have often been told, is "a political animal"; seeing that he is finite, and also must share a finite superficies of the globe with millions of his kind, it is well, perhaps, that he is. It is well also that he is a hunting and killing animal, seeing that he must share the same superficies with millions of millions of living things that are an ever-present menace to his species. Let the analogy be my defence when I say that, in our own time at least, it would be a great improvement if man were a less political animal; we might then hear less of the opposing social and political -isms that so rend the world into warring peoples and classes that human life seems to some of us more like life on the side of a volcano in a colony of idiots, than the garden of Epicurus, the City of God, or the Kingdom of Ends. Social and political intolerance are the fruit of an excessive belief in unrealities, and of all unrealities perhaps the ideal society, the perfect State, is the most mischievous. In so far as political or social philosophy of any form implies a belief in any such thing, or in the power of any individual to approach a conception of it, it is wrongly called "philosophy". Call it "sophism" if you like. There is no philosophy of communism, of fascism, of *laissez-faire*, for the application of philosophical principles within social theory must always lead to scepticism which, however it may be mitigated for purposes of practice, will always remain too cool to breed the zealots, visionaries, and persecutors of our too politically minded species.

I have based my account of the philosophical attitude to politics

and social theory upon the view that the relation of the individual to his society is not that of microcosm to macrocosm, but of microcosm to other microcosms so congruent with it as to constitute its most fitting environment, that is, the environment in response to which it realizes its most characteristic potencies. This being their relation we are unable to reason conclusively about the proper nature of the social whole from anything within our nature or experience. Unlike our speculations concerning the macrocosm of Nature, which can very largely be *a priori*, in politics our approach must be almost entirely experimental. Thus the special ends of social life are likely to be better advanced by the give and take of piecemeal organization and the semi-conscious development of customary and pragmatic principles, than by the speculative creations of even the most rational and far-sighted theorizers. The complete, or even the relative, rationalization of society is an *ignis fatuus*, if that can be called "*fatuus*" that lies at the basis of so much human misery, or "*ignis*" that threatens at last to bring civilization down to a new Age of Darkness.[1]

[1] Sometimes an even more radical argument in favour of the priority of society has been put forward, viz. that because the individual derives life itself and all the benefits and values of life from his social environment, there is no limit to the power rightly possessed by society over the life and activity of the individual, and that his duties towards his society must have priority over all his individual ends and even his conception of moral right. Plato himself comes very near to such a conception of the relations of the citizen and the State in the *Crito*: "Since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us (i.e. the laws of the State) can you deny . . . that you are our child and slave, as your fathers were before you?" (50E). But such a view is based, it seems to me, upon a false analogy of the growth and dependence of the individual on his social environment; it is very like the argument of Hardy's reasoning yokel that because a mite is born in cheese and lives on cheese all his life, he is made of cheese. But even a crystal does not grow simply by accretion: much less does the individual absorb his social environment and compose himself of it. The environment is no more than his opportunity; by his response to it he evokes his individual potencies, but it does not constitute him: the individuals constitute it. Doubtless the society is one of the most useful types of environment for the evoking of the higher potentialities of human nature: *Homini nihil homine utilius* (*B.D.S.*, Eth. IV, xviii, Sch.). Thus as in love a derived perfection is fashioned out of inevitable impediment, so also in general society a perfection is derived from the mutual assistance of the members. We need one another just as in a lesser degree we need all external things: because we are finite and must search unceasingly for completion in and by means of another, must find ourselves in response to the stimulus that wakens us from without. This is a power in society founded upon real weakness in the individuals, but it registers rather a potency in the individuals that in their weakness fashion for themselves a cure, than a power in society itself as an independent microcosm of Nature. Society, indeed, may so develop as to have ends, and to use means, that conflict with the good of the individual, or even with his judgment of right, for there is no axiom

I have said enough, perhaps, in dealing with these three broad examples of philosophical reaction to human experience within the spheres of religion, morality, and sociality to substantiate the general character of the philosophic life that I laid down at the beginning of my discourse. The philosopher has too often been represented as one who has cultivated a toleration so comprehensive as to border on complete indifference to all that is of value and interest to ordinary men:

> on the shore
> Of the wide world I stand alone and think,
> Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

It has always been recognized, of course, that as a matter of fact philosophers are not really indifferent except when they speak *ex cathedra*: "There was never yet philosopher that could endure the toothache patiently", but these were regrettable defections from ideal philosophy. On the contrary, I have contended, concern with finite things and values is the central characteristic of the true philosopher, that he is, in fact, the man with the true sense of the finite; who does not let the finite cloud his vision of the infinite, nor his vision of the infinite, such as it is, take away from his experience its comedy and its tragic import. And it is because he strives ever to maintain a right scale of values that he appears to the zealots as indifferent or even cynical: for zeal is the offspring of a false scale of values, and is twin-brother to intolerance. If a man is zealous and intolerant you may be sure that he lacks conviction; his zeal is the unconscious expression of his doubt; he persecutes to encourage himself. But the philosopher, like the apostle, is "all things to all men"; he will "prove all things" and "hold fast to that which is good". Nothing is alien to him; there are no things that "are not done" or that he will not contemplate himself as doing, given the right circumstances. Thus he is, as I have said, the free man, for there is a way of freedom even in the crater of necessity, the way of understanding. To understand the necessity with which we are encompassed is to find liberty through our very bonds: through the self-imposed and the merely supposed obstacles, by violence; through the genuine obstacles by vision of the secret

that society and the individual must agree; it may even be necessary in such a case for society to coerce the individual: it will remain morally right for the individual to resist that coercion, and there are strict limits in the nature of things to the power of society or any external thing over the human will. And such a conflict between the individual and society will surprise the philosopher least of all men, for he recognizes the relative irrationality of social life, and knows that it is out of such conflicts that society is gradually brought to such perfection as it is capable of as a flexible instrument of human purpose.

union of the finite and the infinite. It is because, and in so far as, the philosopher tests all things by the touchstone of eternity, sees the finite and temporal flood-lit and ghostly under the illumination of eternal values, that he is able to live easily, to keep his finite soul free in the transeuncy and wreckage of time, by setting his affections as far as may be on things that are eternal; not necessarily upon great and lofty objects of cosmic import, but even those simpler objects, more akin to the human heart and sense, which, though finite, yet hold their place firmly in a world viewed in its ordered hierarchy *sub quadam specie aeternitatis.*

GREAT THINKERS

(X) JOHN LOCKE

Professor R. I. AARON

Locke is the first English philosopher to be considered in this series, and that fact of itself is worthy of attention. Philosophy, of course, like science, knows no frontiers and no national boundaries. Yet it is true to say that Locke's contribution to philosophy is typically and peculiarly English. His moderation, his emphasis upon experience, his tolerant spirit of compromise, his dislike of mystical extravagance and of metaphysical speculation, even that elusive quality of his which people call his "common sense", are English traits. His very defects, illogicality leading to inconsistency and an awkward disorderliness of thought so abhorrent to the systematic thinker, are the defects which foreigners most frequently attribute to the English mind. Moreover, it is not so much a question of one or a few traits; the whole effect is English. Locke was, of course, influenced by non-English writers. No thinker appearing at the close of the seventeenth century could fail to be influenced by the new suggestions and new discoveries of that age of genius—least of all so attentive and receptive a thinker as John Locke. And many of these suggestions were made by Frenchmen and Dutchmen. None the less, it is still true to say that Locke is so English that it is difficult for one not steeped in English traditions to understand him. The remark of an eminent French philosopher that no Frenchman has ever understood John Locke and no Englishman Voltaire is doubtless an exaggeration, but it contains an element of truth. Locke is too English for the Gallic mind to comprehend. Yet for that reason, if for no other, he particularly deserves the attention of the English student.

I

The details of Locke's life need not long detain us. There is an excellent biography, written by Fox Bourne over sixty years ago, to which the reader may be referred. (Fox Bourne, however, is no longer authoritative. He made the best use of his materials and was very diligent in research, but unfortunately he failed to discover the most important batch of papers, namely, the Lovelace Collection. In this collection are all Locke's private papers, bequeathed to Peter King, the first Earl of Lovelace, and since retained in the

family. Some of them were published in 1829 by Lord King in his biography of Locke, and Fox Bourne made good use of these; but many remain unpublished to this day. They will provide a fruitful source of information for the future biographer.)

Locke was born on August 29, 1632, at Wrington, Somerset, of a good Dorset and Somerset family. His father was a county attorney who fought on the Parliamentary side in the Civil War. The home was puritan, and although his later experiences broadened his outlook, the son never ceased to be puritan at heart. In 1646 he was sent to Westminster School. The education he received there, as he himself later tells us, was conceived on wrong lines, consisting almost entirely of interminable Greek and Latin exercises, but he did well enough in them to gain a junior studentship at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1652. Henceforth, for over thirty years he made Oxford his home. By 1652 the Puritans had taken over complete control of the university, although they wisely retained many of the Royalist teachers. But strangely enough they introduced little reform into the curriculum, much as it needed reforming. If Locke was dissatisfied with the training at Westminster he was still more dissatisfied with the rhetoric, grammar, logic, and moral philosophy of the university. None the less he persevered even to the point of becoming in due course tutor in Greek and rhetoric. Yet his real interest lay in different studies, in geometry, physics, and medicine. The Restoration of 1660 (which Locke at first welcomed) found him still uncertain as to what career to pursue. He was not anxious to remain a tutor at a college. Various other avenues opened out before him, the Church, diplomacy, and the profession of medicine. But he entered none of these. He continued to drift on at Oxford, a quiet student living a secluded life. Yet he was never idle. The private papers dating from this period reveal his industry and his ceaseless quest for a wider knowledge. He rapidly made himself one of the best-informed of all his contemporaries.

In 1666 an event occurred which changed the course of his life. He made the acquaintance of Lord Ashley, later the first Earl of Shaftesbury. Ashley interested himself in the young man and Locke soon became one of his advisers, living with him in his London home. The change from the seclusion of Oxford to the turmoil of affairs at the very centre of political life was a big one, but Locke applied himself with the same diligence to his new duties. They were varied in character—medical, domestic, and political. Locke carried out important missions for his patron and collected political and social information for his use. Meanwhile, he made many new friends in London who helped to mould his thoughts. The period from 1667 to 1675 is full of strenuous activity, so much so that his health suffered and he was compelled to take a prolonged rest of four

years in France, where again he met many savants and philosophers. He returned to England in 1679, and throughout the troubled years which followed was the close associate and adviser of Shaftesbury. During the short periods in which Shaftesbury was in power Locke was given public offices, and when Shaftesbury finally failed in his purposes and had to flee to Holland, Locke followed him there in 1683. Here he found a peaceful retreat in which his health soon improved. He spent over five happy years in Holland in the company of many excellent new friends, and his enforced leisure enabled him to complete those philosophical works which he published shortly after his return to England.

The Revolution of 1688 brought victory to the cause for which Locke stood, and from his return in 1689 to his death he was regarded as the great prophet of the Whigs. He refused offers of important appointments, but served on various commissions. His indirect influence on affairs was very great, for many of his friends were well placed in the various administrations of William. These last years of his life were largely spent, however, in literary pursuits. His chief works may here be mentioned. In 1689 was published his *Letter on Toleration* (first published in Latin), followed by two further letters on the same theme in 1690 and 1692; the *Two Treatises on Civil Government* appeared in 1690; so also did his most famous work, the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*; the *Thoughts concerning Education* appeared in 1693; and finally in 1695 the *Reasonableness of Christianity* was published. Each of these works received much attention at the time of their publication, all of them gave occasion for discussion and controversy, and all were highly influential. They are the ripe fruit of a lifetime of reflection.

On his flight to Holland Locke had been deprived of his studentship at Christ Church, and when he returned he did not settle down again in Oxford. For some time he lived in London, but the London air did not suit him, and he retired to Oates, Essex, to the house of Lady Masham, the daughter of Richard Cudworth, the Cambridge Platonist. It was at this pleasant retreat, in the care of this gentle lady, that Locke ended his days, October 28, 1704.

Locke was a wide reader, as the catalogue of his library in the Lovelace Collection and his journals show. He learnt much in conversation with men. Consequently it is impossible to give a complete list of the influences which worked upon him. But certain influences are more important than others and these should be noted. If one thinks of the *Essay*, the chief influences, undoubtedly, were Descartes, Sir Robert Boyle, and Gassendi. Descartes inspired him. He taught him that one might philosophize without philosophizing in the ways of the schools. He delivered him from the effete and arid scholasticism of the universities. But Locke regarded Descartes as an over-

speculative and therefore unsound thinker. On most points he ranged himself with the opponents of Cartesianism. Sir Robert Boyle was a greater influence upon Locke. From him he learnt how to approach nature empirically and yet scientifically. Locke's physics is to all intents and purposes identical with Boyle's. His method is the latter's, the "historical, plain" method—even when he turns to the study of the mind. His outlook on life generally corresponds closely to that of Boyle, as is clear if the works of the two are compared. Certainly, Boyle was an important influence on Locke's development. But both men in turn were influenced by Gassendi (1592–1655). It is strange that the influence of Gassendi both on Locke and on English Empiricism has received so little attention. Here, undoubtedly, is a link—I would venture to say the most important link—between modern science in its beginnings in Boyle and Newton and the atomism of Greece. The empiricism of Locke is already present in Gassendi, and the criticisms which Locke makes of Descartes are almost always repetitions of criticisms already made by Gassendi. The people who stress Locke's rationalism regard him as "an English Descartes". If one must label him at all, it would be nearer the truth to call him "an English Gassendi". In the controversy that raged between Cartesians and Gassendists Locke was on the side of the Gassendists—a fact well known to the Europe of Leibniz's day. In forgetting it we have lost one important clue to the proper understanding of Locke's philosophy.

II

Locke's chief work is the *Essay*, and to it we propose to devote most of our attention. The study of it has been helped in this last decade by the discovery and publication of two early drafts of the *Essay*, written in 1671, nineteen years before the *Essay* itself was published, and of excerpts from Locke's journals between 1676 and 1688 bearing on the subject-matter of the *Essay*.[1] As we proceed we may be able to show some of the ways in which these drafts have proved useful.

The aim of the *Essay* is "to inquire into the original, certainty and extent of knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent." It seeks, first, to show the nature of knowledge in order to liberate men from false method; secondly, to establish the extent of human knowledge in order to save men from the scepticism which results when they attempt to know what lies

[1] *An Essay concerning the Understanding, Knowledge, Opinion and Assent*, ed. by Benjamin Rand, Harvard, 1931.

An Early Draft of Locke's Essay Together with Excerpts from his Journals, ed. by Aaron and Gibb, Oxford, 1936.

wholly beyond their ken. Whether boundaries to human knowledge can thus be set up beforehand in a fixed, precise way is a question which Locke did not sufficiently consider. He obviously merely wished to determine in a rough, practical way the fields within which human endeavour was most likely to succeed in its quest for knowledge. It is also noteworthy that from the beginning a discussion of probability is part of his purpose.

Having stated his aims Locke proceeds at once in the *Essay* to an elaborate criticism of the theory of innate knowledge. It is interesting to note that the first draft (Draft A), does not begin with this criticism. The matter of innate knowledge is only introduced at the end of the draft, and then in a brief paragraph in which it is considered as a possible ground for objection to the thoroughgoing empiricism that had been set forth earlier in the work. But in preparing for the second draft, written a few months later, Locke came to the conclusion that innate knowledge required greater attention. He devotes to it thirteen sections at the opening of the draft, and in the *Essay* the discussion is still more elaborate. To understand the point of the polemic it is necessary to know the background. There is little doubt that minor writers, teachers, and preachers used this theory constantly in Locke's day. Man enjoys a mysterious, innate knowledge of God, of moral and of speculative principles. Locke's polemic cleared the air. Viewed from our own perspective, however, the polemic is a little tedious. It overemphasizes the unimportant, the point about knowledge in the womb, and does not pay sufficient attention to what is of fundamental importance, the nature of *a priori* knowledge, if any such knowledge exists. Yet it is well to remember that Locke does give an answer to the fundamental question involved, although he does not discuss *a priori* knowledge in so many words. But he does hold that human knowledge can be explained in its entirety in terms of intuition, demonstration, and sensitive knowledge. This extra mystery, innate knowledge, is unnecessary.

Intuition, demonstration, and sensitive knowledge are described by Locke later. First he must establish another thesis which, in his opinion, is essential to his argument. This is the empiricist thesis that all knowledge depends ultimately on sense-experience or reflection (i.e. introspection) for its subject-matter, in other words, that whatever we think about is either given directly in sensation or reflection or else is derived in some way from what is so given. This is the main theme of Book II. In order to establish it he finds it necessary to carry out the complicated task of classifying and analysing ideas. For he believes that what we think about consists in ideas, and in order to show the empiricist origin of the object for thought it is necessary to show how all ideas come ultimately from

sensation or reflection. This explains why his analyses of many ideas, such ideas, for instance, as space, time, number, and infinity, are frequently so inadequate. In the end all he wishes to show is that these ideas are either themselves given in sensation or reflection or derived from ideas so given. Frequently he goes beyond the minimum of analysis necessary for his main theme and discusses matters not strictly relevant. Indeed, a great part of Book II is slightly irrelevant in this way, although his irrelevancies contain some of his finest thoughts. But the purpose of Book II is to establish the view that the materials of knowledge are all empirical in their origin.

It is important to distinguish empiricism from certain other tenets with which it is confused. For instance, empiricism is not to be identified with sensationalism. Locke categorically denies the view that knowledge is sensation and that sensation is the only kind of knowledge. According to Book II sensation merely provides the *materials* for knowledge. It is in Book IV only that we begin to hear of sensitive knowledge as one kind of knowledge, and even then there are other and more important kinds. Empiricism is not sensationalism. Nor, again, should we identify Locke's empiricism with his "idea-ism" and representationalism. This is the garb in which Locke sets out his doctrine; the garb may be successfully criticized and yet the empiricism at its core remain untouched.

Locke used the term *idea* ambiguously. Sense-data are ideas. But so also are concepts or notions. The latter Locke holds to be meanings, but the former, sense-data, are very different. They are entities, having a representative capacity, existing not in the real physical world, for they represent what exists there, but in some semi-psychical realm between the mind and the object known. In a loose sense they are said to be "in the mind", a phrase which confused not only Locke but also Berkeley. *Mind* comes to mean two things, (1) the active percipient and (2) the place of ideas, and the two meanings are not compatible the one with the other.

Locke uses the term *idea* for "whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks". In so far as the idea is the sense-datum he might, he acknowledges to Stillingfleet, have used the term *representation*. For he does accept the representationalist theory. That what we immediately perceive is merely a copy of the real object outside was the almost universally held opinion of Locke's day. Some doubted the perfection of the copy and Locke himself would not admit that our ideas of secondary qualities resembled those powers in things which produced them. Yet Locke accepts the representationalist and dualist view in general. His criticisms of the theory are from within. In the same way he accepted the compositionalism of his day. Ideas are either simples or complexes, made up of such simples. It is true that this term *simple idea*

was given many different meanings as Locke's thought developed. It is also true that in none of its forms was the classification of ideas according to simple and complex wholly successful. And it is highly significant that when he came to write the fourth edition Locke added a passage to II, xii, 1 which modified the basis of his division radically. II, xii, 1 in the fourth edition is Locke's last word on the problem. It teaches clearly that the compositional theory has been found to be unsatisfactory.

We must leave these matters undeveloped and merely repeat the central point, namely, that Locke's empiricism might be true even though his account of ideas, his representationalism, and his division of ideas into simple and complex were all shown to be defective. I remember listening to a lecturer devote a laborious term to the work of proving that Locke was a representationalist. Having then shown the defects of representationalism, he concluded triumphantly that he had completely refuted Locke. The fact was, of course, that what was most important in Locke's doctrine remained unconsidered by him.

III

The incidentals in Book II are so many and so important (in the light of their influence on subsequent English and European thought) that it is impossible to do justice to them here. We may point to a few of them in passing. There is first that subtle distinction between primary and secondary qualities. The ideas of secondary qualities have been given much consideration, but it may prove that the greatest significance attaches to what Locke tells us—or rather, perhaps, assumes—about the primary qualities. How do we know that these pertain to the *insensible* parts of matter? Clearly not by sensation. In searching for the primary qualities is he not analysing the concept of matter as used scientifically in his own day? If this is so, his account of primary qualities needs more attention than has been given to it. The whole discussion of primary and secondary qualities leaves us with three important conclusions: first, that secondary qualities are not what they appear; secondly, that ideas of primary qualities which necessarily pertain to matter are given in sense-experience; thirdly, that the primary qualities do pertain necessarily to all material existence (leaving it an open question whether "material existence", as the scientists of the seventeenth century conceived it, was real—as I believe Locke thought it to be—or merely a working hypothesis).

Again his treatment of the conceptions of space, time, number, and infinity is very revealing. In the *Essay* these are conceived modally. It will be recalled that ideas are divided into simple and complex, and the complex, again, into modes, substances, and

relations. (I assume that the reader is acquainted with this division and do not propose to explain it.) In the case of space, something—although it is not clear what—is given in sensation. But any particular space is a simple mode. It is interesting to find from the drafts and the journals, however, that Locke first conceived space as a relation. Nevertheless, as the discussions of infinity in the draft and the accounts of space in the journals make clear, Locke came to see that it would be easier to prove the empirical origin of ideas of space and of infinity, of time, and of number, if they were regarded as simple modes, that is, as the outcome of the repetition of a simple idea. And since in the *Essay* the sole purpose is to show the empirical origin of these conceptions, he adopts this somewhat unnatural artifice. But in so far as one considers Locke's theory of space as such, the *Essay* is interesting rather from what it leaves unsaid than from what it says. Indeed, it is difficult, if not impossible to understand his theory of space from the relevant passages in the *Essay* alone. With the aid of the journals, however, Locke's position becomes clearer and the opposition between him and Newton as to whether space is absolute or merely relative is revealed. In the light of this further knowledge the passages in the *Essay* take on a new meaning. But his treatment of these four concepts is very inadequate. He is content to show their empirical origin. Apart from these discussions little that he says about modes in Book II is important, but certain mixed modes become very important in Book III (although there it is very difficult to distinguish mixed modes from relations).

A concept that gave Locke a great deal of trouble was that of substance. It is the something-I-know-not-what which remains when one takes away from a complex idea of any substance all the qualities that pertain to it. But it is not known positively. We cannot but feel that some support for qualities is necessary, and we take any particular idea of substance to be a complex idea consisting of all the qualities perceived together with the further idea of that which holds them together. It is, however, no criticism of Locke's empiricism to say that we know substance although it is not given in experience, for Locke's point is that we do not know it in any positive way. It is a supposition arising from experience, although Locke cannot see on what experience it is grounded. May it, perhaps, be connected with the experience of togetherness which he recognizes? We do not merely perceive qualities, for instance, the redness, roundness, and hardness of the apple, but we perceive them, in Locke's words, as "going together". May not this be the empirical basis of the concept of substance? Locke himself is completely baffled by the concept. He almost wishes that there were, after all, innate ideas that he might explain it in that way.

The discussion of relations in the *Essay* is far from satisfactory.

Practically all the major problems are left unconsidered, although hints are dropped from time to time which show that Locke was not unaware of many of them. The most important item under this head is causality, and no one who reads Locke on causality attentively and connects his statements with those of other contemporary writers such as Cordemoy and Malebranche, with whose theories Locke was well acquainted, will fall into the error of supposing that there was no problem of causality prior to Hume. Yet Locke's account of causality as of other relations is most incomplete.

Before leaving Book II a word should be added about Locke's treatment of the mind and of its operations. The drafts show that this was not a part of the original programme; but Locke must have felt that some account of ideas of reflection was necessary to complete his description of ideas. Accordingly he adds certain chapters in which are to be found the beginnings of modern psychology. His sources of information are introspection and the observation of behaviour, introspection being the main source. His discussions for the most part are crude, and interesting in the main to the historian of psychology only, but some of the points he makes (for instance, the distinction between mere sensation and perception involving judgment) are of the first importance. Moreover, he not only discusses the operations of the mind but also the mind itself, although his discussion in that particular is less psychological than metaphysical. His usual view was the orthodox, traditional one that mind is active, immaterial substance. But in IV, iii, 6 he made the bold and heretical suggestion that God may have superimposed the power of thinking upon matter in the case of the human being. Substantially man is material, but it is matter to which God has seen fit to add the power of thinking and perceiving. This materialist and Hobbist suggestion, making impossible, for instance, the traditional argument for the soul's immortality, later aroused a storm of controversy. More interesting, however, is the discussion about personal identity in II, xxvii. This chapter is, perhaps, the finest and closest piece of argument in the whole of the *Essay*.

IV

Book III and the opening half of Book IV, are the parts of the *Essay* which were written last. (The chapter on identity which we have just mentioned is still later, for it did not appear in the first but only in the second edition.) They also happen to be the most living parts of the *Essay*. The argument grows and develops as Locke writes. Book III is an essential propaedeutic to Book IV—how essential Locke had not at first realized. For it discusses words and language. Now the problem of words is the problem of the

general word. And in describing the general word Locke is compelled to put forward a theory of universals which, though never free from ambiguity (largely because he fails to unravel the tangled skein of his own thought on this matter), yet enabled him to introduce the important distinction between real and nominal essences. It is this distinction in turn which makes possible the further distinction between the mathematical and the natural sciences and the all-important division of the sciences in the opening part of Book IV. The distinction between real and nominal essences is best understood in terms of our knowledge of substances in the external world. My idea of apple is a general idea, consisting of so many simple ideas, red, hard, sweet, and so on, together with the additional idea of substance. Now of these simple ideas I may choose a certain number as always present when I experience the apple and so regard them as essential. Here, then, is my essence—but it is merely a nominal essence. An apple, no doubt, has a real essence, in the mediaeval sense, but in its case the real essence is always hidden from me. For that reason my knowledge of physical objects and of the connections within and between them can never be certain. In the case of mathematics, however, the nominal essence of, for instance, the triangle is also its real essence. The definition of it as a three-sided rectilinear figure tells me not merely what I take it to be, that is, the nominal essence, but also what it essentially is. In Locke's language real and nominal essences are identical in the case of the mathematical idea, since it refers to nothing beyond itself, as does my idea of the apple, but is "its own archetype".

But it is not only this discussion of universals and of nominal and real essences which makes Book III important. It contains also a close analysis of language and an examination of its imperfections, together with suggestions how these might best be avoided. Locke identified logic with σημειωτική, the doctrine of signs, particularly those signs which are words, and in Book III we find the beginning in English philosophy of that close logical analysis of language with which we have since become so familiar. Again, Locke's account of definition deserves to be mentioned both for its penetration and for its striking modernity.

We must, however, hurry forward to Book IV. Here at last Locke comes to grips with his main problem, that as to the nature and extent of knowledge. The drafts once again prove to be exceedingly useful. Draft A, in particular, helps us to understand how Locke came to say such (apparently) contradictory things about knowledge in Book IV. The reader will find one theory of knowledge in IV, i and ii, the theory usually attributed to Locke, and another very different one in IV, ix and xi. The mystery, however, becomes somewhat less of a mystery if we follow the argument of Draft A.

For there we also find these two theories, although now in the reverse order, and it is possible to see how the change from one view of knowledge to the other takes place. Locke began with the common-sense view that knowledge is the apprehension of real existent things. I know this table and this chair. But he also found himself accepting the current representationalism and coming to the conclusion that since I only know things through ideas I can never be quite sure that I do know the thing as it is. Very soon in the draft we find him having to admit that he cannot find any instance of certain knowledge in this sense of the term. To save himself from scepticism, he is driven to view knowledge from another angle. Can we find certainty if we confine ourselves to ideas and do not seek to go beyond them? The answer of the draft is not clear. But the *Essay* is quite explicit. Knowledge, says IV, i, is "nothing but the perception of the connection and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy, of any of our ideas." And the example Locke has in mind in the opening chapters is mathematical knowledge. There we are concerned merely with ideas whose nominal essence is their real essence, and there is no limit to the knowledge possible.

He seems to have taken his account of knowledge in IV, ii largely from Descartes's *Regulae*. (Descartes, it will be remembered, also had mathematics in mind in setting forward his theory of knowledge.) Knowledge is either intuitive or demonstrative. Intuition is completely infallible and so wholly certain. Demonstration is also certain for it consists of a series of intuitions, but some shade of doubt may enter if we recall that it sometimes involves memory, a fallible faculty. So far Locke accepts Descartes's doctrine, and the resemblance between Descartes's *Regulae* and IV, ii of the *Essay* is very marked. But he does not agree with him as to the further point that the perception or intuition is of a purely intellectual object, a "simple nature." On the contrary, Locke holds that the intuition is of relations between ideas and that these ideas are empirically derived. Thus he accepts Descartes's intuitionism but does not give up his own empiricism. The opening chapters of Book IV do not contradict Book II.

Having set out the nature of human knowledge in the first two chapters, in the third he proceeds to consider its limitations. We are limited in the first place by experience itself; where we have no ideas we cannot have knowledge. Secondly, when experience provides us with ideas we cannot always intuit necessary relations between them. We can always know that an idea is identical with itself and that it is not another. We can also know necessary relations between ideas, if we can once identify nominal and real essences, that is, rid the ideas of any reference outwards and deal with them as ideas which are their own archetypes. This we have succeeded in doing

in the case of mathematics. (Locke thinks that morals might make another instance.) There is then no limit to the knowledge we may attain in inquiries of this sort. But when we consider ideas as representing the external world the mind can know few, if any, necessary relations between them. No science (in the strict sense), no system of certain knowledge, of the natural world, nor again of human nature, is possible for us. In these spheres the human mind must perforce wait upon experience, and the utmost it can hope for is the probable inductively-established generalization.

Such, very briefly, is the account of knowledge outlined in the opening chapters of Book IV. But Locke cannot leave it as it stands. To IV, ii he adds that halting fourteenth section. We have sensitive knowledge of the existence of things. Such knowledge is certainly not a perception of a relation between two ideas. The defect of the theory of knowledge which Locke has set down in IV, i and ii is immediately revealed. It cannot account for existential knowledge. In IV, iv he tries to account for it within the framework of the epistemology of the first two chapters, but fails lamentably. In IV, ix and xi we find him returning to the first view of Draft A. We know our own existence and the existence of things directly. These chapters set forward, largely by implication, a new account of knowledge and Locke does not try to make it consistent with the first. He leaves both side by side without attempting a final synthesis. (A question which arises in connection with existential knowledge is this: Does its assertion contradict Locke's empiricism? It certainly contradicts the view that the materials of knowledge are always *ideas*. But Locke in reflecting on existential knowledge may have thought that it itself was part of experience. Experience need not be confined to the gaining of ideas, that is, to the seeing of colours, the hearing of sounds, and so on. The conviction or knowledge that this table before me exists may also be part of my experience. In that case the empiricism would still stand, although Locke's "ideaism" could not be maintained.)

The remaining chapters of the *Essay* are devoted to the consideration of probability, of judgment, faith, and reason. Unfortunately, I have no space here in which to discuss them.

V

Nor have I left myself sufficient space in which to consider Locke's views on matters other than those referred to above. His moral theory is largely unwritten. From what he does say it is clear that no satisfactory work on ethics could be written by him until he had resolved the inner conflict in his thoughts between hedonism and rationalism. His account of Christian theology in the *Reasonableness of Christianity* is highly interesting as revealing the liberal point

of view in the theological speculation of the late seventeenth century. His *Letters on Toleration* argue that, from its very nature, no church has the right to persecute non-members and no secular power has the right to punish in its name. *Some Thoughts concerning Education* is an admirable work. It reads best of all Locke's works, and its suggestions are eminently sane. But in this article I cannot consider any of these works in detail.

Apart from the *Essay* Locke's most important work is the *Two Treatises on Civil Government*. Locke here rejects two theories of government (1) that the monarch is absolute since he is the divinely ordained father of his people, (2) that the monarch is absolute since government is only possible where sovereignty lies undivided in the hands of one person. He easily overthrows the first view. The relation of monarch to people in a modern state is not comparable with that of father to child. But the second is not so easy to overthrow. Locke's task is to show that a strong government is possible in which the people shall yet be free. Moreover, he wishes to prove that, from the nature of civil society, government with the consent of the governed is not only possible but is also the sole form of government which is rationally justifiable.

Prior to the civil state is the state of nature in which all men were free and equal. Men were rational and regulated their conduct by the law of nature. They possessed powers of punishing other individuals who broke that law. The state of nature was a state of peace, but since men were not perfect, it was a state of precarious peace. A man might forget the law of nature, another might be hasty in judging and so might inflict punishment upon the innocent. Accordingly, men agreed to live together in a civil community, giving up to the state this one right of judging and punishing, and gaining in return a security which they had not known in the state of nature.

This picturesque theory is nowadays rejected in most of its details. But the essential point of the argument remains. If civil society is contractual, even though only implicitly, then the people are not powerless puppets in the hands of the ruler or rulers, but have rights of their own. Absolutism is unjustifiable. Government is a trust. When Locke proceeds to work out the details of the new constitution which shall safeguard the rights of the people and yet give strong government, the difficulties in his way prove to be very many. In particular his constitution lacks any explicit sovereign. In spite of its defects, however, the *Civil Government* is of first-rate importance. It gathers up into itself all that is living and vital in seventeenth-century radical thought, and its principles, it is not too much to say, have dominated liberal thought from that day to this.

In concluding this article a word should be added about the value of Locke's works. Undoubtedly he is still a considerable

influence on the thought of this country. His political reflections count with us, though official liberalism is under a cloud. Mr. J. M. Keynes in a recently published work suggests that we still have something to learn from Locke's economic theories—I have not found space in which even to mention these. In education his views have long since been accepted in theory, but in practice we yet fall short of the ideal which he set before us. What of the *Essay*? Is it by this time out of date? Many interpretations of it are certainly out of date. Few books have been more misread. Its teaching has been distorted by historians of philosophy who were only interested in the way Locke influenced Berkeley and Hume, by sensationalists or critics of sensationalism who only studied a few pages of Book II, and by rationalists or critics of rationalism who were blind to everything in Locke except those points in which his position resembled that of Descartes. But the *Essay*, fortunately, survives such false interpretations. If one forgets the critics and turns to the *Essay* itself one finds it a deep well of living thought. Amongst its most valuable contributions we might select the discussion of personal identity, the emphasis on logical analysis, the account of definition, the highly important division of the sciences, and, finally, the belief that all knowledge is acquired, the inner core of his empiricism. And this list certainly does not exhaust the treasures which the *Essay's* pages contain.

The greatness of Locke it must be admitted does not lie in his thoroughness, in his logicality, or in his consistency. He was not an eminently original writer. He was peculiarly sensitive to the intellectual movements of his day, and was eclectic in the best sense. He gathered into his works the more important findings of his own brilliant age. Throughout he was critical. The charlatan and the sham found in him an uncompromising enemy. He was extremely honest, even to the point of preferring honesty to consistency. He avoided the *high priori* methods of brilliant speculators, for such brilliance might lead one away from the truth. He was cautious in the extreme. He never forgot that reason in man has its limitations. He would not rashly pass to a conclusion because some one line of thought pointed that way. He did not distrust reason, but he wished to be sure first that he had the full evidence before him. Behind this attitude of caution and extreme prudence is an austere philosophy of life. Man is not meant to know everything. His is "a twilight state" and there are limits to what he can see. But he sees enough to find his way if he but use his eyes properly. Locke's greatness lies in this prudence, this wisdom, arising out of his insight into man's nature. Voltaire hardly ever refers to him except as "le sage Locke" —a fact which seems to prove that one Frenchman at least understood the key to his greatness.

SOME POINTS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOCKE

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The more elementary student used to be left with four main impressions of Locke. Firstly, he was an "empiricist"; secondly, he occupied an inconsistent intermediate position on the road to Berkeley and Hume; thirdly, he was pre-eminently the philosopher of common sense; fourthly, he committed the epistemological error of teaching that our only objects of knowledge were ideas in our mind which copied reality. All these dicta contain an important element of truth, but are misleading by reason of the excessive emphasis which has been placed upon them.

To take the first point, when we decide whether to call Locke an empiricist or not, we are confronted with the difficulty of defining the latter term. It is commonly defined in opposition to *a priori*, and I think the usual meaning of *a priori* is approximately rendered by saying that *a priori* propositions and inferences are propositions and inferences which are logically necessary. This is at any rate the sense in which I shall use the term *a priori* in this article. Now, if "empiricist" means somebody who denies the possibility of any *a priori* knowledge, Locke was certainly not an empiricist, but then it would be difficult to find any important philosopher who was. A promising definition of "empiricist" would be "somebody who denies, not all *a priori* knowledge, but all *synthetic a priori* knowledge," but in that case we seem to have the curious result that according to this definition the rationalists prior to Kant were empiricists, and Locke[1] and probably even Hume were not. Nor did Locke, like Hume, confine all such knowledge to our own ideas, at least in practice. Perhaps the chief reason why Locke is called an empiricist is because he denied innate ideas, but the difficulty is to discover any philosopher who would really have accepted them in the sense in which they are denied by Locke. However, I think that the only satisfactory course is to treat empiricism as a relative term applicable to those philosophers who lay special stress on the empirical side of our knowledge as opposed to "rationalists," who lay special stress on the *a priori* without attempting to define precisely where empiricism ends and rationalism begins, any more than we can define precisely in politics where, e.g., conservatism ends

[1] *Essay*, Bk. IV, Ch. 8.

and liberalism begins. In that case Locke is, I suppose, an empiricist when judged by the standards of his own time, i.e. he laid more stress on the empirical element in knowledge than did most of his contemporaries, but on the other hand, if he were alive now and had produced a philosophy of the type which he did produce he could not reasonably have been called an empiricist, but rather the reverse, since, though he is not fond of the phrase *a priori*, he gave a more important place to the *a priori* in effect than do the majority of philosophers of the present day. For he held that ethics was or, rather, could become an *a priori* science like mathematics; he insisted against the rationalists of the time themselves, as I think, rightly, that synthetic *a priori* judgments were possible and indeed the only *a priori* judgments which were of much use; he claimed to establish the existence of God by *a priori* metaphysical argument; he insisted that *a priori* knowledge was not limited to mathematics, but might conceivably occur with any kind of quality or relation. He even asserted that *all* knowledge was *a priori* in the sense defined above, a very extreme position, when he said that "knowledge seems to me to be nothing but the perception of the connexion and agreement or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas,"[1] for this means *logical* connexion, etc., but the statement is inconsistent with his admission of intuitive knowledge of the self, or indeed with any introspective knowledge of our own states, which Locke certainly meant to admit, let alone with the "sensitive" knowledge of physical objects asserted by him. Its exclusive wording must therefore be regarded as due to a "slip" on Locke's part. The non-empirical elements in Locke's philosophy have been very well brought out by Professor Gibson and others, so I need not dwell further on this point.

Locke's polemic against innate ideas is evidently regarded by himself as at once very important and very heterodox. In practice, however, it is almost entirely a polemic, no doubt valuable enough, against the confused use of certain vague words. His main object of attack was not really the theory that new-born babies had an innate conscious knowledge of the law of non-contradiction and other *a priori* principles, a view which perhaps nobody was ever silly enough to hold. What he is contending, I think, is that the theory of innate ideas, commonly accepted at the time, is not capable of any clear statement which does not make it *either* an absurdity *or* a commonplace tautology that everybody would have accepted. If the philosophers who talk of innate ideas really mean what they say, he contends, then, the absurd conclusions about new-born babies really follow, for babies are alleged to have the ideas in question, since these are innate, and they must be aware of the ideas if they

[1] IV, I, 2.

have them, for an "unconscious idea" is a contradiction in terms; if the philosophers do not mean this, they must mean by "having an idea of *x*" having the "capacity to come to know *x* eventually," and in that case all our knowledge is innate, for we can have no knowledge which we have not a capacity to come to have. The theory of innate ideas could only seem at once tenable and useful because the word idea was used without anyone being clear what was meant by it. In order to give point to Locke's criticism we need not suppose that any important philosophers held the absurd view criticized by Locke, but only that they held views which, if thought out consistently, implied it. And it is now a commonplace that Locke's denial of innate ideas was combined with a whole-hearted acceptance of *a priori* knowledge. For, even though no ideas are innate, we may still have *a priori* knowledge provided one idea[1] can imply (logically entail) another.

Locke, however, does not succeed in refuting the possible view that some ideas might be innate in the sense that our minds were so constituted as inevitably to form the ideas at a certain stage of our development, or *on the occasion of* certain experiences without the characteristics of which they were ideas ever being actually given in experience. In that case neither should we be conscious of the ideas from birth, nor would it have to be admitted that the word innate was being used in a sense in which all our ideas are innate, so that the dilemma mentioned by Locke would not arise, though it must be granted that it is an abuse of language to call an idea innate when only the capacity to form it is innate. Again Locke overlooks the possibility that there might be "simple ideas" which were neither innate nor derived from sensation and reflection (which term, as used by Locke, is practically equivalent to introspection), but stood for objective characteristics discovered by a mode of cognition other than empirical observation (Professor Broad's "non-perceptual intuition").

Locke has been charged with inconsistency because he asserted that all ideas were derived from empirical observation, i.e. either sensation or "reflection," and yet admitted the ideas of substance and cause which could not be so derived. But I do not think he is without a defence; he is not so crude as some take him to be. Now in two passages[2] Locke derives the idea of cause from observation of external objects, but this is obviously a very difficult position. I fear that Locke confused observation of succession with observation of causation. But the most important source of the idea of causation, and indeed the only source of the idea of *active* causing, was for him observation of the will, so that in its clearest form causation was

[1] The word idea is, of course, very ambiguous. I discuss the meaning of this term on top of p. 36 to end of article.

[2] II, 7, 8; 26, 1.

an idea of reflection. Now it is certainly easier to suppose that we observe causation in ourselves than that we observe it in the external world, and it is a position that has been and still is widely held. Even if he had held that the idea of causation was derived from reflection alone Locke would have been justified in extending it to the external world on his premisses, since he believed that it was self-evident that every change must have a cause. There is no absurdity in supposing that we can see *a priori* that a certain characteristic *a* (causal activity), which is in fact observed by us only in minds, is entailed by another characteristic *b* (change) which we have observed in physical objects as well as in minds, and therefore concluding that *a* as well as *b* is present in all cases of physical, as well as psychological, change, although it cannot be observed by us there. Such a view is not inconsistent, whether it be true or not; and the same characteristic of causal activity might well be present both in entities which exercised will and entities which could not do so. Locke, however, does feel doubtful whether physical objects can be regarded as in the fullest sense causes, because we have no evidence that a physical thing can initiate motion, but only that it can receive it from something else, namely, another moving body, and so on till we reach the ultimate cause, God. Locke's alleged circular proof that everything which has a beginning has a cause by means of the argument that something cannot be caused by nothing[1] is not, I think, really intended as a *proof* of causation at all, but as an appeal to the established principle of causation (said to be itself "known by an *intuitive* certainty") in order to prove the existence of a first cause.

"Substance" presents more difficulty. There can be no doubt that Locke believed in substances despite his inclination to ridicule the emptiness of the conception, and that he differentiated a substance sharply from its qualities, and it is further clear that substance, at least as described by Locke, cannot possibly be an idea which is given in empirical observation. But Locke has a reply to this very obvious objection, which appears in the controversy with Bishop Stillingfleet. The latter says, "If the idea of substance be grounded upon plain and evident reason, then we must allow an idea of substance which comes not in by sensation or reflection; and so we may be certain of something which we have not by these ideas." Locke replies,[2] firstly, that substance is a general idea, and that he had always maintained that "general ideas come not into the mind by sensation or reflection, but are the creatures or inventions of the understanding." But this, as he quite realizes, is not a sufficient answer, for he also held that general ideas were derived by abstraction from what was *given* in experience, and could not be created

[1] *Essay*, IV, 10, 3.

[2] *Vide* Locke's First and Third Letters.

out of material which had never been so given, and it remains difficult to see how substance, or any ideas of which it could be a generalization or combination, could be so given. By Locke's very definition the idea of substance could not consist of ideas given in experience, for any such ideas would be ideas of qualities, and substance is not a quality or combination of qualities. But he now propounds an analysis of the idea of substance which avoids this difficulty. The abstract idea of substance is said by him to consist of two elements. (*a*) There is the relation of inherence which is conceived as holding between any substance and its particular qualities. Now relations are, according to Locke's philosophy, in quite a different position from simple qualities. For Locke holds that the former are not given in experience as such, but "that the mind could *frame to itself* ideas of relation," though these must "terminate" in *given* simple ideas. He is not therefore committed to holding that this "inherence" is anything sensible, as he would have been if he had held the same view of relations as of qualities (including under "sensible" data of the inner sense), only that it is seen by the mind on examination to be somehow involved in data which are sensible in this wider signification. For, though he leaves his view of relations vague, he certainly does not hold that relations are merely the creation of the mind, but insists that they have "a foundation" in reality. And he thinks that on considering the nature of qualities we can see that they cannot subsist by themselves, but must stand in a relation of inherence to something which is not itself a quality. This is to admit *a priori* knowledge, as Locke always does, but not to admit a new simple idea underived from experience or a relation not entailed by empirical data.

(*b*) Because a relation implies a second term, we cannot help supposing that, since all qualities stand in a relation of inherence, there must be something else to which they are related. But we can have no idea of the second term of the relation except the general one of "something or other." We suppose that there must be a second term to stand in the relation, but we do not know anything about it. The reason Locke gives for the belief in substance is that we cannot conceive how qualities should subsist alone, we see this to be impossible, and must therefore posit something other than a quality on which they depend. Now it is certainly not self-contradictory to suppose that we might be able to see that *abc* (qualities) could not exist by themselves without knowing what the other term *d* is which is required if they are to exist, and I cannot see anything here logically impossible in Locke's position or inconsistent with his view that all qualities are abstractions from what is given in experience, though I certainly do not think his view of substance a sound or plausible one. What is given in experience *might* always

logically entail something other than itself, and we *might* be able to see that the entailment held, though we could say nothing about the nature of what was entailed except that it was something or other not itself a quality or collection of qualities. Locke had, however, asserted that relation always "consists in the referring or comparing two things one to another,"[1] and it may well be asked how we could possibly compare two things if we did not know anything whatever about one of them. Hence his view of substance seems inconsistent with his view of relation. It is also not clear how the general idea of "something or other" originates, but I suppose Locke would regard it as that which all ideas of sensation and reflection have in common. In that case it would be an abstraction from experience applied to things (substances) which we had reason to suppose existed, but which were not direct objects of experience.

Locke holds both that we can reason *a priori*, and that all our ideas are derived from empirical observation. Are the two positions in general compatible? There is one fairly obvious objection against Locke's view that I have never seen stated, as far as I remember, namely, that if we can reason *a priori* at all we must have an idea of entailment, i.e. of the relation by which a conclusion logically follows from its premises, and that the idea of entailment itself is one which cannot possibly be derived from empirical observation. If the objection had been made to Locke he could, however, no doubt have answered it by saying that entailment was not a simple idea but a relation, as he did in the similar case of inherence, and that an idea of a relation need not be given in empirical observation. He could have added that the idea is only formed late in life, if at all, since we can argue without thinking of the relation of entailment as such; but all the same it is a great pity that he did not give a fuller and clear account of his view of ideas of relation. Certainly, if we can form ideas of relations that are not given, but only implied by experience, the assertion that all our simple ideas are given by sensation and reflection loses almost all its sting, and we have less justification than ever for calling Locke an empiricist.

The main reason why Locke was regarded as an empiricist is perhaps because he happened to have successors who developed his philosophy in an empiricist direction. Had he had successors who developed it in a rationalist direction, he might have been called a rationalist. But, just as critics no longer treat Kant as merely a stepping-stone to Hegel, so they are now less inclined to treat Locke as a mere stepping-stone to Berkeley and Hume: and this is a great gain, for such treatment prevented the adequate consideration of his philosophy on its own merits. As it was, critics

[1] *Essay*, II, 25, 5.

who liked Berkeley or Hume tended almost to confine their account of Locke to blaming him for not having been consistent in carrying out the principles which led to his successors' doctrines, and critics who disliked them to blaming him for having originally committed the errors which ultimately led to such pernicious results. I admit that Locke was often inconsistent, but I very much doubt whether he was more inconsistent than Hume, though the inconsistencies the two commit are different. And I certainly think it very unfair to attach special blame to Locke for not having anticipated Berkeley's revolutionary discovery and seen the full strength of the case for the idealist view of the physical world, or whatever one calls the type of philosophy introduced by Berkeley. No doubt Locke would have an additional achievement to his credit if he had seen how good a case could be made out for it on certain lines, but to blame him specially for not doing so is like blaming specially a particular engineer of 1800 because he did not think of inventing a railway engine. This remark holds whether we substantially agree or disagree with Berkeley's treatment of the physical world. In either case we must admit that to work out such a novel and, later, enormously influential philosophy so plausibly was a great achievement, but in either case we must refuse to attach any special blame to Locke for not having anticipated this stroke of genius. If we must blame somebody, we should blame not Locke specially, but practically all the philosophers prior to Berkeley's time, for none of them saw the strength of the case against realism. (Locke certainly saw that some sort of case could be made out for idealism, but thought it too absurd to be worth serious consideration, and dismissed it on the strength of some rather superficial arguments.)

As I said earlier, Locke has been described as *par excellence* a philosopher of common sense. "Common sense" as a quality of mind Locke certainly possessed, but if this statement is more than an appraisement of Locke's personal qualities, and is meant to refer to the content of his philosophy, it is necessary nowadays to remember that there are different senses in which a philosopher can be said to be in accord with common sense. Thus the type of philosophy advocated by Professor Moore has often been called a philosophy of common sense, because he insists that the philosopher must, independently of philosophical argument, accept as absolutely true such statements as "there is a table in my study," "the table I see is the same as the one you see," etc. But, while Professor Moore accepts common sense so far as to take for granted without argument the truth of some such propositions, he insists that it is the business of the philosopher to analyse them, and that the correct analysis may be quite different from any that would ever have occurred to the plain man prior to the study of philosophy. But

something rather different from this is meant when Locke is called a common-sense philosopher. It was not only that Locke accepted without argument the truth of common-sense beliefs about everyday matters, but also that he was inclined thus to accept the truth of common-sense beliefs about *philosophical subjects*. By common-sense beliefs here I mean those beliefs which men who have not previously made any special study of philosophy usually hold, or would hold if they were stated to them in words which they could understand. At any rate, this is what is usually meant by calling his a philosophy of common sense. In so far as Locke took this line he is open to a criticism which would not affect Professor Moore. For, while it may very reasonably be contended that a philosopher *qua* philosopher cannot legitimately contradict common-sense beliefs on subjects where he is no more entitled to speak than the plain man, as is the case if he denies, e.g., the truth of the proposition that Cambridge is north of London, or that it is fine here now, it is not by any means clear why the philosopher should attach great weight to the opinions of common sense on questions which fall within philosophy. "The opinions of common sense" here means "the opinions of those who have not studied philosophy," and why, it may be fairly asked, should experts in any field bow to the opinions of those who know next to nothing about their subject? This would only be a reasonable course if the study of philosophy instead of improving impaired our capacity for making right philosophical judgments, and if so why study it since we could be better philosophers without doing so? Locke would, however, reply that there are some things within the field of philosophy which we all know intuitively prior to any philosophical study, and that this must not be overlooked by the philosophers. And there *may* well be some common-sense philosophical beliefs (whether they rise to the level of *knowledge* or not) of which we cannot get rid, even after having studied them philosophically and seen their difficulties, and this continued intuitive conviction *may* justify their acceptance as truths about reality. But in any case I think this tendency in Locke has been much exaggerated. He accepted the common-sense belief in causation and the common-sense belief in physical objects in a realist sense, but so did everybody in his day, and he does not hesitate consciously to disagree with what he thinks the common-sense view to be about secondary qualities. His belief in substance as an unknowable substratum quite separate from its qualities is also instanced in this connection, but is this "common sense"? However, we must admit that Locke at least thought it was. But besides the three cases just mentioned it is by no means easy to find other important instances where Locke is influenced by "common-sense opinion" rather than by philosophical arguments.

Locke did not anticipate the present-day "Cambridge school" by distinguishing between knowing a common-sense proposition and knowing the analysis of it, so that to accept common-sense statements, whether about philosophical or about everyday subjects, was for him to accept them in what seemed at first sight to be their most obvious meaning. We are certainly not justified in concluding that what seems the most obvious way of analysis is therefore necessarily wrong, but neither are we justified in assuming without further discussion that it is necessarily right. We may note, however, that in one case Locke declares that our common-sense statements are true only in a sense other than that in which the man in the street would think them true. This is in the case of secondary qualities. Locke asserts expressly both on the one hand that men generally, i.e. till schooled in philosophy or science, think that the actual colour they see qualifies physical objects, and on the other that it does not really qualify them, but that physical objects are coloured only in the sense that they produce sensations of colour when we look at them. So common-sense statements about colour are according to Locke only true if the word which stands for the colour of the object is taken as signifying not the sensible quality seen, but the causal property (power) of the physical object to produce in us under suitable conditions the perception of that sensible quality.[1]

Let us turn now to the fourth "stock examination answer" about Locke mentioned at the beginning of this article, and refer to his view that our only immediate objects of knowledge are our own ideas. Locke begins the fourth book of the *Essay* with this highly shocking statement: "Since the mind, in all its thoughts and reasonings, hath no more immediate object but its own ideas, which it alone does or can contemplate, it is evident that our knowledge is only conversant about them."[2] What does this mean? If taken literally it would seem to imply that we can know nothing about either physical objects or minds other than our own, or even about ourselves, for neither physical objects nor other minds nor ourselves are merely ideas of ours. However a new light is thrown on the statement if we realize that what Locke is considering here is *a priori* knowledge. In fact the definition he gives of knowledge in the next sentence as "the perception of the connexion and agreement or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas" is applicable only to *a priori* knowledge, since Locke is thinking here of logical connection, and not to knowledge derived from empirical observation, which kind of knowledge he seems to have forgotten in formulating his definition. And we find from its application that the purpose of this doctrine is not to assert a representative theory of knowledge

[1] II, 8, 24. [2] IV, 1, 1.

of existent objects, but to lay down a non-existential theory of *a priori* knowledge. For, though our ideas are existents according to Locke, it is not as existents that we thus perceive them to agree or disagree, but as qualities.[1] Locke is in fact giving a first imperfect formulation of the generally accepted modern doctrine that all *a priori* propositions are hypothetical, and can only be applied to existents if conjoined with an existential premiss established empirically, or something very like the doctrine in question. Whether he could have worked this conception out adequately while retaining his view of ideas as existents is another matter.

As regards knowledge of physical objects, Locke certainly held that we can *perceive* immediately only our own ideas, but it does not follow that we can *know* only our own ideas. Locke admits that we can know what we do not perceive immediately, i.e. the existence of physical objects, though he also admits that the certainty of this kind of "knowledge," "sensitive knowledge," is not quite absolute, so that it is "knowledge" only by courtesy, though its certainty is held by him to surpass mere probability.[2] He no doubt regards it as being as near certainty as does almost any modern realist philosopher. Locke also holds that we can know ourselves immediately without the intervention of any idea, though it is not quite clear whether he means to apply this only to knowledge of our existence, or also to knowledge of our particular present and past states through introspection and memory. Knowledge of or belief in the existence of other minds than our own he does not discuss. What Locke has maintained is not that we can only know our own ideas, but that we can only know the agreements or disagreements of our ideas, and he is enabled, verbally at least, to leave a place for knowledge of real objects other than ideas by including under the term agreement not only agreement between ideas, but agreement between an idea and real existence.[3] I suppose, however, he would have held that we do not know the external reality *in the same sense* as we know connections of ideas, and he would certainly have held that we could not know it at all without the mediating help of ideas. But it does not follow from this that, when we have this mediating help, we do not really know the external object itself, but only our ideas.

There is no doubt, I suppose, that Locke held ideas to be mind-dependent, existent particulars. He did not, I think, ever mean to identify them with states of our mind or acts of awareness, but consistently regarded them as *objects* of the latter, though not as objects which could exist without our being aware of them. Their relation to images is very obscure. The term idea as used by Locke

[1] Locke often confuses an idea of a quality with the quality of which it is an idea. [2] IV, 2, 14. [3] IV, 1, 7.

is clearly wider than image, i.e. all ideas are not images, but he may have thought of images as a species of ideas, i.e. perhaps all images are ideas. Ideas seem to be for him entities which are capable of bearing the same kind of relation to all kinds of objects as images do to some. Now the objection arises that there is no evidence whatever for the existence of any such entities excepting images. We know by empirical observation of ourselves that acts of awareness exist, and that images exist, but we have no empirical evidence whatever for these mysterious third things, ideas, other than images, if we regard them as existents at all.

But this opens up another possibility. For Locke ideas are often component parts, or constituents, of propositions, and if we treat them in this way we shall have an account of them which agrees with most of what Locke says, and clears up many difficulties. I am here using the term "proposition" to signify what is meant by a statement, in distinction both from the verbal statement itself and the fact, if any, to which it refers. Propositions can (and must) be either true or false, while facts cannot be either and statements can only be so in the derivative sense of expressing true or false propositions. Locke distinguishes "verbal" and "mental" propositions. According to him they both consist in the "joining or separating of signs," only in the case of mental propositions the signs are ideas, not words. Verbal propositions normally stand for mental propositions, and in the case of *true* mental propositions the ideas constituting the proposition are "so put together or separated in the mind as they or the things they stand for do agree or not."[1] In what follows I shall be speaking only of "mental" not of "verbal" propositions, for the constituents of verbal propositions would obviously be not ideas but words. I had better add that I do not by any means approve the *ipsissima verba* of Locke's account of propositions.

Now we need not think of propositions as independent subsistent entities, as Meinong did, but it is clear that, whether we regard propositions as such independent entities or not, we must recognize some sense in which they can be considered in abstraction from the fact that any particular person is knowing, believing, asserting, doubting, or entertaining them. We are constantly thus considering them in logic, in science, and also in everyday life. We do not call them propositions in everyday language, but everyone is familiar enough with the thing if not the name. Whenever we discuss the question whether a "belief" or "assertion" is true or false, we are discussing the truth or falsity of the *proposition* believed or asserted, so that the idlest gossip deals with propositions as well as the subtlest philosopher. But all this need not necessarily imply that propo-

[1] *Essay*, IV, 5.

sitions have a being independent of being thought, only that they can, as is undoubtedly the case, be considered in abstraction from any particular thought. Locke, however, returns no clear answer to the question what propositions are. It seems clear that neither they nor their constituents can be regarded as *existing*. Either they are separate entities which have being but not existence, or, as seems more reasonable to my mind, they are merely elements in acts of judging, doubting, etc., which can be treated separately only by abstraction, and therefore (like other universals) still cannot be said to be existents. The proposition "that the sun goes round the earth," or "that justice is better than injustice," is not an existent, nor is it made up of existents (even if, as in the first case at least, it is only about existents). Yet for Locke certainly ideas are existents.

I should thus suggest that Locke in thinking and writing about ideas usually really treated them as if they were constituents of propositions, but did not think fit to raise the question of their exact status, nor realize the problems involved in this inquiry. It did not occur to him that he was committing himself to the introduction of a class of non-existent entities by separating ideas both from images and acts of mind, and by treating them as logical contents, to use Professor Gibson's expression. I have called ideas "constituents of propositions" not "propositions," because Locke takes as examples of ideas, e.g. space, solidity, colours, numbers, horse, etc., and it is obvious that none of these could constitute a proposition by itself, while any might occur in various propositions as subject or predicate, or part of the subject or predicate, as is the case when, e.g., an adjective standing for a certain quality is attached to a noun so as to constitute together the verbal expression of the subject or predicate.

There are various points in Locke's account which seem most inconsistent and irrational at first sight, but are rendered intelligible if we look upon "ideas" in the way just suggested. In particular it is as constituents of propositions and not as existent particulars that ideas can be said to have a logical connection the perception of which constitutes *a priori* knowledge. "When he looked into his mind, 'to see how it wrought,' Locke neither looked for nor found a mere flow of subjective processes, but a variety of logical contents, essentially involving a reference beyond the momentary state of consciousness in which they are apprehended; and from this reference he never attempted to abstract. It never even occurred to him to treat our cognitive consciousness exclusively, or even primarily, from the point of view of subjective process. . . . The 'natural' connections of ideas were those non-temporal relations of content, the perception of which constitutes scientific or universal know-

ledge."[1] It is a very curious fact that, while Locke affirmed that all ideas were particular, in the list of ideas given by him every one mentioned is a universal. He does not speak of, e.g., solidity as a kind of idea of which there are as many particular instances as there are ideas of particular solid objects, but as an (a single) idea.

If we take "ideas" as constituents of propositions, there is a sense, it may be plausibly suggested, in which we can say quite truly that the only object of knowledge is their agreement or disagreement. For the "agreements and disagreements of ideas" are then propositions; and it may be argued that there is *one* usual sense of "know" in which anything we know immediately and indeed anything we know at all is always a proposition. What we know is always "*that* something or other. . . ." I am inclined to think that it would be better to make a slight amendment and say that what we know is not the proposition mentioned itself, but *that the proposition is true.* But at any rate it is certainly arguable that there is a usual sense of "know" in which we can be said to know only propositions. But in that case, since we certainly do know facts, we should have to distinguish another sense of know, in which we can be said to know facts, and in this sense we could not be said to know propositions. Whether there are two such distinct senses of "know" or not I am not at all clear, but the view that we can only know propositions seems not an impossible one if interpreted in this way. I cannot say I am very happy about this, but I go on the principle of letting Locke have as long a run as possible for his money. (There is certainly another sense of "know," often called "knowledge by acquaintance," in which we can be said to know particular objects as opposed to facts or propositions, but this is irrelevant here.)

But it is certainly not true that we know immediately only propositions if by this is meant either that facts can be known only by inference, or that "knowing a fact" is really merely an abbreviation for "knowing a proposition which corresponds to the fact." If it is the case that there is one usual sense of "know" in which we can know only propositions, this need not cut us off from reality, for it is not incompatible with its being the case that, whenever we know a proposition (in one sense of know), we thereby also know, and even perhaps know *immediately*, a fact in another sense of know, so that knowing (in sense 1) a proposition and knowing (in sense 2) the fact to which the proposition corresponds logically entail each other. We might compare "thinking" and "thinking of." I cannot think of anything without at the same time thinking thoughts, and I cannot think thoughts without at the same time thinking of something. Only in this case the two usages expressing different relations are distinguished by the insertion or omission

[1] Gibson, *Locke's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 22.

of the word *of*, while with knowing propositions and knowing facts exactly the same word is used for both. Whether this view is ultimately tenable I am doubtful, but it seems at least a plausible suggestion, and one which resembles Locke's position, since he undoubtedly held that we do know real existence while yet in a different context saying that all our knowledge "is only conversant about our ideas."

The account of ideas as equivalent to constituents of propositions is certainly not a complete account of the meaning of the word for Locke, and is inconsistent with the fact that he certainly regarded ideas as existents. But I think it expresses the more important side of his thought on the subject. His view of ideas as the only immediate objects "of the mind in all its thoughts and reasonings" may be said to have had four sources. (1) The representative theory of perception, which practically all the philosophers of the period regarded as forced on them by the facts of illusion and the physiological explanation of sense-perception, naturally suggested a representative theory of knowledge in general, though the latter is not really a logical consequence of the former. (2) The "correspondence theory" of truth suggested similar conclusions, if ideas were viewed as constituents of the propositions whose correspondence constituted truth. (3) It seemed easier to handle *a priori* knowledge if we regarded the latter as a perception of connections between our "ideas." (4) Locke was probably also influenced by the metaphysical notion of substances as completely independent of each other. "Since a substance possesses an independent and exclusive existence, the mind and the remainder of the world of real being, which consists of other substances, stand over against each other in a way which renders impossible any direct relation between them in knowledge. It is upon this metaphysical theory that Locke bases the necessity of the mediating function of ideas, as at once belonging to the mind and referring beyond it."[1]

I fear the present article has been rather too discursive in character, but it seemed to me that there were a number of scattered points on which there was a little that I might perhaps say with profit. And I hope this article may have suggested to readers that it is possible that Locke's theories possess some intrinsic merit, and that they may be capable of holding their own with those of other philosophers, all of whom, and not only Locke, are often guilty of inconsistencies, and so may possibly somewhat increase interest in the philosopher who has probably exercised more influence in the past than any other English thinker.

[1] Gibson, *Locke's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 13.

ERRORS OF LOGICAL POSITIVISM

A. D. RITCHIE, M.A.

Positivists have excelled at destructive criticism. This criticism has been useful for pruning away absurd and superfluous theories but it is liable to be used to prune away everything else. The latest exponents, the Logical Positivists, are no less adept at criticism than their predecessors. The doctrines of this school have been surrounded with an air of mystery and inquirers have been frightened off by alarming technical apparatus. We all know that the Logical Positivists had proved that everybody else talked nonsense, but we did not know what they themselves talked. Mr. A. J. Ayer's exposition of the doctrine, *Language, Truth and Logic*, is therefore welcome as it is simple, clear, and free from technical mystification. It gives the ordinary reader a chance of seeing what it is all about. When the fundamental assumptions of the theory are stated clearly, as they are by Mr. Ayer, it seems to me equally clear that they are wrong, so that it should not be surprising if some of the conclusions drawn from them turn out to be wrong too.

In what follows I shall be concerned only with the general statement of the doctrine and with its application to scientific theory; not with any other applications.

The first set of assumptions are, as the name of the school implies, logical. It is assumed that all alleged propositions, that is all sentences or linguistic forms which profess to convey information or to make assertions which could be either true or false, are of three kinds. These are (1) Factual Propositions or Empirical Hypotheses, (2) Tautologies or Definitions, (3) Meaningless or Metaphysical verbal forms. Only class (1) are significant or actually say anything about anything.

Class (1) are either themselves assertions as to matters of fact which can be verified by experience or else they can by purely logical analysis without change of significance be translated into such propositions (p. 19 seq.). A proposition is said to be verified by experience when it refers to or describes correctly actual or possible contents of somebody's sense experience. It is not clear whose experience is concerned, whether it is somebody specified, anybody, or only the speaker himself. I have put in "somebody," but I suspect that the upholders of this doctrine always mean themselves. There are difficulties connected with the method of verification, but Mr. Ayer deals with them and his treatment will be discussed later. One

further brief comment may be put in here. Mr. Ayer recognizes (p. 135 seq.) that the same form of words may function as (1) a factual proposition and also as (2) a tautology, without apparently realizing that this admission will get him into trouble. The purely logical analysis of propositions becomes impossibly difficult if such initial ambiguities are allowed.

Class (2), Tautologies, are analytic in the sense that their contradictories cannot be asserted. For that very reason they do not assert any fact or inform us about facts. They have a legitimate use as definitions, to indicate what linguistic symbols are to be used as equivalent to what others. Mathematics consists entirely of such propositions; for instance $2 + 2 = 4$ defines (in part) how the symbols 2 and 4 are to be used. According to the Logical Positivists, philosophy ought to consist of such propositions, because its function is to analyse common assertions by substituting for them others which will display their true structure and significance, if any. There are propositions tautological in form, like "Business is Business," which have an emotional significance but no literal significance. Mr. Ayer disapproves of them.

This brings us to Class (3). Some propositions which are ostensibly factual or similar to factual ones have reference to entities which cannot from the nature of the case be experienced themselves or be displayed as logically constructed out of elements of experience. Alleged propositions of this kind are held to be strictly meaningless or "metaphysical." "Metaphysical" in Mr. Ayer's vocabulary is a term of abuse; that is to say it is an epithet applied to things he dislikes and not applied to things he likes, though possibly equally applicable.

This classification of propositions is the logical basis of the theory and distinguishes the "logical" from other positivists.

Perhaps it is a minor point, but it should be noticed that the term tautology is used in a loose and possibly misleading sense. Strictly tautology ought to mean an equation of identities, e.g. $2 = 2$, or Business is Business. Such equations, if intended seriously, are asserted to show that the terms are to be understood strictly according to definition and not figuratively. In the equation $2 + 2 = 4$ the two sides are not identical; they contain distinct and different symbols. These can, however, be substituted for one another without error for all mathematical purposes. We may say "Two sheep and two goats, that makes four animals" as long as it is only the numbers we are interested in and can afford to neglect their special characters as sheep or goats. This brings me to the next and more important point.

Everything the Logical Positivists say about language is based upon a theory of the mathematical logicians about mathematical

language. This is probably excellent within its own sphere, but can it be extended to apply to all kinds of communication by language, that is by signs? Granted that the symbols 2 + 2 and 4 can be substituted for one another absolutely without error or change of meaning in all mathematical propositions, that is because the use of mathematical propositions depends entirely upon their form or structure and not at all upon their matter or content—if they have any. In other words, the propositions are used as definitions. In all ordinary language, including non-mathematical scientific language, form and matter cannot be readily distinguished. Even when they are distinguished the use of language depends upon the matter as well as the form, because the assertions are material; they point to what happens to exist, and are not purely formal like those of mathematics. The legitimate logical transformations that can be applied are limited to the formal or structural elements of language; in ordinary language what is expressed by signs such as "and," "or," "not," "all," "any," "some." Even then there are limitations. To say "The Nile is a great river" is not exactly the same as to say "The Nile is not a small river." Nor even is "Edinburgh is north of London" quite the same as "London is south of Edinburgh" except for certain limited technical purposes such as map reading, when A and B could stand for Edinburgh and London, and the propositions are in effect mathematical.

It is only to a very limited extent that linguistic signs can be interchanged without alteration of meaning, as is seen from the notorious fact that every language possesses words and phrases that cannot be translated into a foreign language. As a lawyer once pointed out to me, Mr. Justice Stareleigh's dictum, that "What the soldier said is not evidence," cannot be translated into French, because in a French court everything is evidence, or into German, because in a German court it would be an insult to the army. Forms of words can be found in French and German which to the ignorant Englishman may seem equivalent. They are not equivalent for Frenchmen or Germans, because their different history and traditions have given their language signs different meanings; they are referred to a different background.

If it is objected that all this has to do with the emotional effects of language and not with its legitimate scientific use, I would point out first of all that the proposition just mentioned is a technical one used in a strictly technical sense and not for the purpose of exciting irrelevant emotions, quite the contrary. But even where emotions are aroused, why assume that the expression or arousing of emotions must be illegitimate and incompatible with the scientific use of language? When you make an assertion at least you desire (Emotion No. 1) your hearers to assent (Emotion No. 2). To express and arouse

emotion is the essential and fundamental function of all linguistic intercourse between human beings, even mathematicians and logicians. If it were not for the emotions concerned nobody would say anything, and the emotions are as much a part of the meaning as anything else. Emotion of course may be and often is objectionable when it is misplaced or inappropriate, just as it is objectionable to tell lies or misunderstand what is said. The emotion is right and the proposition true when they fit the facts, wrong and false when they do not.

To give a general definition of language one would have to say something of this kind—Language symbolizes primarily an attitude or type of behaviour of the speaker which is directed towards things or persons, and it is used for the purpose of modifying the attitude or behaviour of other persons or possibly himself. These attitudes or behaviours are the external expression of what is internally an emotion of some kind. A command is perhaps a more elementary kind of speech than an assertion. But language symbols are concerned secondarily with symbolizing appearances which are themselves signs standing for the things or persons towards which the speaker's emotions, thoughts, or actions are directed. This applies to all types of language. Mathematical language is the limiting case where the symbols are emptied as far as possible of all content so as to apply to everything in general and nothing in particular. It is only in mathematics that terms are interchangeable absolutely without error. The Logical Positivists, however, treat the limiting case as though it were the typical case, with the results that might be expected.

So much for the logical part which seems to be simply a mistake; now for the positivist part which is a more serious affair. Mr. Ayer assumes that all valid propositions asserting matters of fact are logically equivalent to or can be reduced without change of meaning to propositions which assert nothing but that certain data of sense can be or are experienced under certain conditions. That is to say Positivists like Mr. Ayer are Phenomenalists. The chief use the Phenomenalists make of their assumption is to show that propositions they dislike cannot be so reduced and are therefore invalid. Propositions they like are treated more circumspectly. I am inclined to suspect that no proposition would come through the ordeal unscathed.

Consider an ordinary scientific law, say "The boiling point of benzene is 80.4° C." This is a straightforward empirical generalization from experiment and can be verified (according to the scientific use of this term, not necessarily the positivist use) any day by anybody who can obtain the necessary apparatus and has the elementary knowledge and skill to use it properly. Let us see what this involves. In the first place Aristotle or Archimedes, though cleverer than you

and I, could not do it. They could not obtain the necessary technical information and had no chance of acquiring the necessary technical skill. In the second place, Robinson Crusoe on his island could not do it even supposing he had the knowledge and skill. Though I say "could not," I am prepared to admit that if the necessary raw materials were present in the island and if he lived long enough and worked hard enough, it is just conceivable that he might manage it. He would not only have had to make glass and blow his apparatus—easy enough of course when you know how—he would have to construct a thermometer and a barometer. He would have to calibrate them and work out the various corrections to be applied to their use. Lastly he would have to prepare pure benzene.

You and I can buy the benzene in a bottle trusting to the knowledge, skill, and material equipment of the coal miners, gas workers, and chemical workers who prepare and purify it, and trusting too to the integrity of the people who bottle it and label it; whereas they might have filled the bottle at the nearest garage. We must either trust in its purity as purchased or else purify it ourselves. We shall buy our thermometer and probably trust to the maker's or somebody else's calibration; even if we calibrate it ourselves we shall do so against another thermometer taken as a standard and assumed to be trustworthy. Even if we read the barometer ourselves, we shall trust to somebody else for the accuracy of the scale and the corrections to be applied. The last and really the least part of the business is setting up the apparatus and distilling the benzene, but even here the complications are not at an end. In nine cases out of ten we shall not see the mercury thread in the thermometer creep up to the mark we have agreed to call 80.4 and remain steady there while the bulk of the liquid distils over, but we shall see it remain steady at some other mark. However, when we have applied corrections, which people have worked out and printed in books, for the barometric pressure at that time and place and for the cool portion of the thermometer stem, the corrected number will come to 80.4 or something very near. Still we may have the bad luck to do the experiment during a storm when the barometer is changing rapidly, and then the temperature will not keep steady at all and we may have to start all over again.

Positivists seem to imagine that all that happens is to read the name Benzene on the label and see the mercury thread coincide with 80.4 on the scale. If that was so, the assertion that benzene boils at 80.4° C. would be tautological. The name on the label is a linguistic sign; so also is the scale on the thermometer. If there was nothing else involved we should have to conclude that by definition "Benzene" was equivalent to "what boils at 80.4° C. as indicated by the position of the mercury thread on such and such a scale," and similarly that

the significance of the 80.4 mark was that by definition it corresponded to the temperature of the vapour of boiling "Benzene."

There is a grain of truth in this notion that the law holds by definition, as can be seen from the result of a negative experiment. Suppose that when distillation began the thermometer reading was round about 60° C. and then gradually and steadily rose until by the end it had reached 120° C.; should I conclude that the law was false? Of course not, I should conclude that the stuff in the bottle was not benzene; in fact that it had been filled at the garage pump and the label was fraudulent. It is not fair to conclude, however, that the law is a tautology. We are not dealing here with mathematical terms which can be invented and defined at will, but with terms intended to describe natural entities and processes, that are largely independent of human volition. It may be part of the definition of benzene that it boils at 80.4° C. but it is only part. There is no complete definition of benzene; something unexpected may always turn up. Moreover, something else may be found to boil at 80.4° C., in which case the definition would need to be modified.

For certain purposes scientific laws can be treated as equivalent to definitions, and so far as they are used in this way are not strictly true or false or liable to upset by observation. But the definition may always turn out to be inconvenient in use and have to be dropped and another put in its place. Moreover, the fact that for some purpose the same form of words is used as a definition does not prevent it being used in other ways simply as a summary of what has actually been found to happen. Every generalization is both a summary of past events and a method of defining terms for future use; the two functions are distinct but related. The propositions of natural science must themselves be examined to see how they are actually used. It is a grave error to assume off hand that they are just like mathematical propositions.

I fear I am digressing and going back to matters of logic. The main point to be emphasized here is that the verification of so simple and obvious a generalization as the boiling point of a substance is a matter of great complexity. It is not to be lightly dismissed as "an observer experiencing certain sense data under certain conditions." It is true that there are certain critical sense data which, if they are of one kind, verify the law, if of another, confute. But these critical sense data are a very small part of the whole story and they are meaningless by themselves without the rest of the story. The story even in this simple case is a long and complex one. It has behind it a vast structure of human effort and experience, a co-operative effort, and the experience of many generations. Countless men of science from Galileo on have worked out the knowledge needed for it. Cinnabar miners in Spain, coal miners in Yorkshire, and glass

workers in Czechoslovakia have sweated for it. If the verification of this law really depended upon translating it into terms of a single man's sense experience, it would have to go by default; at the best his task would be insuperably complex and difficult, at the worst impossible. Can co-operative human effort be translated into sense data; and if so, whose? Berkeley would have had an answer to this question, but his modern imitators, who think they can have his phenomenalism without his God to hold it all together, have no answer.

No proposition that enters into the discourse of the natural sciences describes or refers directly to an immediate datum of sense experience. They refer to the general properties and relations of physical objects and in certain cases to general relations between physical objects and classes of sense data. (For confirmation of this, see any scientific textbook.) The classes of sense-data to which they refer are of a restricted and highly conventionalized type, mainly what Sir Arthur Eddington calls "pointer-readings." The function of the data is purely symbolic; they are nothing by themselves. They symbolize causal relations among physical objects, more particularly the operations the observer carries out upon physical objects. In fact "the observer," that famous figure in philosophical discussion, is more correctly described as "the operator."

Nobody has ever reduced any scientific proposition to propositions referring to nothing but actual or possible data or contents of sense experience. Failure to do so is concealed under a smoke-screen of phrases like "the necessary conditions for observations" and "logical constructions from sense data." The conditions, the observer himself, and the reason for logically constructing remain unexplained. The logical constructions are never constructed in any specific case; we are merely told they could be. In fact the positivist or phenomenalist account of the process of scientific verification is pure myth or, if you like, metaphysics. I should prefer to say that any possible account of the process of verification is metaphysical and the phenomenalist account is bad metaphysics.

This point is so important that perhaps I may be permitted to labour it further. The physical sciences as expounded by the investigators themselves have never been positivist. The positivists have always been armchair critics or else mathematicians. Meyerson has repeatedly emphasized this in his historical discussions of the matter, and it is no reply to Meyerson to say that though scientific investigation actually took this road, it ought to have taken another and positivist road. Science is what the investigators have actually done, and there is no "ought" about it. As Whitehead has pointed out (*Adventures of Ideas*, p. 161 seq.), if investigators had been positivists, they would in many cases have failed to make the discoveries they

did. Physical science has always been based upon a belief, possibly "metaphysical," that there are causal processes operating in a physical universe which does not consist entirely of sense data. This belief may give rise to difficulties but its abandonment gives rise to worse ones.

If sense data are the only things that exist, then the existing ones must be actual sense data somebody is experiencing. Possible sense data without something to render them actual are nothing, and what renders them actual cannot be other sense data unless we attribute to sense data hitherto unsuspected "metaphysical" properties. Again, the positivist to fill his universe has to resort to logical constructions from sense data, but these are not sense data themselves, any more than a class is one of its members. The theory that scientific entities are logical constructions from sense data is intended to provide a logical bridge between immediate experience and scientific theory. It cannot bear the additional burden of the doctrine that scientific entities are "nothing but" sense data. The plausibility of the positivist case rests upon his apparently appealing to actual sense data; the possibility of its being valid rests upon a concealed appeal to what are not actual sense data.

It is worth noticing that certain psychologists (e.g. D. Katz; *The World of Colour*) have endeavoured to describe the actual character of sense data, have found the task singularly difficult and are not all agreed as to the results. On the other hand, their difficulties and disagreements have no obvious relevance to the propositions of physical science, and throw no doubt upon them.

Admittedly there are difficulties on any theory in accounting for the relations between sense experience and the supposed real world, but ordinary comon sense and most realist or idealist philosophies do not stultify themselves at the outset. They allow, for instance, for the existence of some machinery by which possible sense data may become actual even if they find it hard to give a coherent account of the machinery. Possible sense data without machinery to actualize them are myths. Berkeley's phenomenalism, as I have said before, was reasonable. You can say of the material world "*esse est percipi*" if there is some being whose *esse est percipere* always and everywhere. A world can be built out of actual sense data if they are all actual always. Otherwise it must be built out of sense data and other things which are not sense data.

Phenomenalism therefore seems to me to be definitely wrong. It is not so much that it asserts what is false as that it neglects what is true. Nevertheless, there does appear to be something of value in positivist criticism, and positivism is perhaps not necessarily bound up with phenomenalism. Before discussing this point, however, there are some further aspects of Mr. Ayer's exposition to be mentioned.

In discussing the process of verification by observation Mr. Ayer decides, for reasons that appear to me sound, that absolute certainty is unattainable for any type of factual assertion and that probability is all that can be expected. As to the notion of probability, he does not attempt (perhaps wisely) to give a logical account of it, but contents himself with a pragmatic one. He says (pp. 143, 144), "Roughly speaking, all that we mean by saying that an observation increases the probability of a proposition is that it increases *our confidence* in the proposition, as measured by our *willingness to rely on it in practice* as a forecast of our sensations and to retain it in preference to other hypotheses in face of an unfavourable experience." Then he goes on to develop this notion of probability in more detail, and says later that what he says applies to all empirical propositions without exception, whether singular, particular, or universal. The whole of the discussion could hardly be bettered, but it introduces a terrible serpent into the positivist Eden. Notice the words I have italicized, whereby the truth or probability of factual assertions is made to depend upon value judgments based upon our emotional response. This conclusion will not worry most people, but it should worry Mr. Ayer, because in the next chapter he dismisses all ethical and aesthetic value judgments as mere expressions of emotion, of no factual significance and strictly meaningless. He holds (p. 158) that to say (1) "you acted wrongly in stealing that money" adds nothing to the literal meaning of the assertion (2) "you stole that money." It merely shows that the expression of it is attended by certain feelings in the speaker. If this is so, he cannot also say that to assert his feelings of confidence in a proposition or his willingness to rely on it in practice add anything to its literal meaning. If to say that something is good, bad, right, wrong, beautiful, or ugly, is to say nothing, so also to say that something is probable is to say nothing.

It is worth noticing that the example is not quite fair because an ethical judgment is already implied in the word "stole." The origin of the curious dogma that sensations are essential constituents of factual propositions but emotions are not, is easily seen. It is the theory that the "subject" or "observer" is a purely passive recipient and not an agent or operator.

The sources of the dilemma are the fundamentally false logical theory of propositions and the positivism from which Mr. Ayer starts, and not his eminently reasonable views on probability and verification. Any theory of verification would be placed in the same difficulty given the same assumptions. Any type of assertion about truth, falsity, or probability is an assertion of value and will be meaningless if assertions of value are meaningless. I understand that some who incline to logical positivist views would admit that asser-

tions about the truth of propositions are meaningless, but if so they had better give up philosophy and take vows of silence.

It is perhaps necessary to insist further that there is no escape from the difficulty by saying that assertions about the truth or falsity of propositions are definitions of terms or tautologies, because that is what they are not. They are either statements of fact or nothing. If you want to explain the meaning of "It is true that . . ." you can do so by substituting "It is a fact that, . . ." "It happens that, . . ." or "I expect that, . . ." or "I am confident that. . . ." It must be some phrase indicating an attitude of mind, or emotional state directed towards alleged facts or events. This is simply another way of saying what I have said already in defining language.

There is another dilemma for Mr. Ayer. It is not so vital perhaps, and I am not at all clear where the fallacy lies. He has an interesting argument (pp. 206, 207) against the common view that the contents of a person's sensations are entirely private and inaccessible to anybody else and that it is only the structure that is accessible. This is an argument which I should gladly subscribe to, but it involves the assumption explicitly stated by Mr. Ayer that it is a mistake to draw a distinction between the structure and content of sensations. But if the only factual propositions are propositions about sensations, how can it be legitimate to distinguish between structure and content in propositions? According to any theory, it must be admitted that there is some correspondence between propositions and what propositions are about; so that the difficulty is a real one. I do not profess to be able to see the way out.

The Logical Positivists have drawn attention to the problems of the character and functions of language and have shown that in some way the structure of language is or ought to be related to the structure of the world. We should be grateful to them for raising the question, even though their answers are wrong. They are wrong, as I have tried to show, in respect both of their logic and their phenomenalism. Their logic is a fallacious extension of theories applicable only to mathematics. In fact, the linguistic problems they raise cannot be solved by logic but need psychology too. To these fallacies they add the older one of phenomenalism.

Like Lucretius, the positivists conceive their role as that of destroyers of superstition. Most people are superstitious, and superstition takes many different forms, so that there is no lack of dragons for the slaying. To consider only scientific superstitions, there has been a tendency to include in scientific theory hypotheses or hypothetical entities which are superfluous in so far as no specific observable consequences can be deduced from them, or, at least, no consequenecs that cannot be deduced on other grounds. Criticism of such theories is a useful service, for they may be worse than

superfluous, they may hinder the progress of knowledge by setting up barriers to observation.

Positivist criticism has, however, often been misdirected and ineffective because it was based upon misapprehensions as to the methods of scientific investigation, and because it was mixed up with phenomenalism. It has been assumed that science consisted of two parts, theories and facts. The theories were conceived as the most important part. They were essentially things written in books and capable of being criticized independently apart from "facts." It was forgotten that all statements of theory are metaphors (this statement is not a metaphor) and that metaphors are good or bad, helpful or unhelpful for purposes of communicating knowledge, rather than true or false simply. It was also assumed that the "facts" were simple collections of actual and possible sense data.

A correct statement is not easy to make in any simple way. The following is as near as I can get. Science is what scientifically trained persons do. Scientific training consists in acquiring technical skill, becoming a craftsman, as well as in learning what others are doing and have done by means of similar technique. The "facts" of science are not easy to disentangle from the theories because the ascertaining of facts depends upon the use of instruments, the construction and use of which depends in turn upon theory. It is, however, possible to make a rough distinction between that minimum of theory that is needed for experimental operations and the immediate results of the operations on the one hand, methods and data one might say, and theory in the stricter sense on the other, that is to say the formulation of abstract schemes intended to generalize the data as far as possible. These abstract schemes will by preference be expressed in mathematical form.

There is a tendency among theoretical physicists to say that the terms that are used for theoretical formulation need not have any "meaning" provided that all variables in the theoretical formulation can be translated into variables capable of direct observation by the use of appropriate methods. This tendency implies a partial acceptance of positivism.

Opposed to this modern tendency is an older one, still popular among experimental physicists and perhaps universal among experimentalists in biological science, the tendency to construct models as theoretical formulations. The models may be conceived in mechanical terms or be merely diagrams describing hypothetical geometrical relations. The experimentalist is generally not a mathematician by nature though he may have acquired mathematical technique, but is something more like a mechanic. That is to say he is good at handling things, and he likes to picture the world of scientific theory after the fashion of the things he handles. The

model-making tendency has led sometimes to serious fallacies, because it allowed people to think the ultimate small-scale entities, atoms, electrons, protons, etc., were endowed with the same familiar properties as the instruments they handled and the things they looked at. The notion will not, of course, bear examination, for the familiar properties of what we see and handle depend upon the fact that these are aggregates of vast numbers of the ultimate units, which must themselves have quite different properties. As a parallel, the average age of the whole population of the British Isles remains constant (or nearly so), but that does not prevent each one of us growing older from year to year. It is easy to understand that an atom cannot be coloured and that colour is a property of aggregates. It is perhaps less obvious but equally certain that an atom has strictly no shape or size, because whatever has shape and size must have a surface, and only a large aggregate can have a surface. In fact, if Descartes was right in saying that the essential property of matter is extension, then atoms are not material.

An atom is best described as something happening round a centre. Sets of these centres tend to oscillate about certain mean distances when considered over long enough time intervals. To call this shape and size is at the best a figure of speech. That in fact is just the trouble; everything that is said about atoms must be said in terms borrowed from our knowledge of gross matter and must be metaphorical. These metaphors are liable to be taken literally. The formulae of the mathematician are also metaphors, but fortunately they have no literal meaning to deceive us.

In so far as theories depending upon models are liable to abuse, positivist criticism is justified. But there is no justification for sweeping them away altogether, because they have undoubtedly been useful. It may be instructive in this respect to consider the history of the atomic theory.

The atomic theory is one of those very general theories such that all possibilities can be stated as a simple dichotomy—either matter is infinitely divisible or not; if not, then there are atoms. No recent physicist, I believe, has ever taken infinite divisibility seriously. It is a difficult conception and its consequences obscure; but as far as any consequences can be made out it seems to contradict certain elementary facts, such as the expansion of gases, the reflection of light at surfaces, the existence of chemical elements and compounds. All these things are easy to understand on the atomic theory. It is true that classical hydrodynamic theory appears to assume that fluids are infinitely divisible, but this means no more than that their structure, if any, must be very fine relative to the volumes actually considered. At any rate, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century physicists seem to have been atomists simply because the theory clarified

their ideas.There were in those days no consequences that could be deduced from it and directly checked by observation. On these grounds contemporary positivists might have condemned the theory. The fault, however, lay with the lack of the technique needed to make the right kind of observations. As soon as the technique developed, the deductions were made and verified by observation. Scientific observation does not consist, as many seem to believe, in sitting with your mouth open waiting for things to happen. It consists in going about and interfering with things. What needed to be discovered were the methods of quantitative analysis of chemical compounds, begun by Lavoisier and continued by his successors. The last necessary step was taken by Dalton, who deduced from the atomic theory and the law of conservation of weight in chemical changes that, whenever two kinds of atom combine, they must combine in constant proportions by weight. Further, if two can combine in different proportions to make different compounds, the ratios of these proportions must be as simple whole numbers. These deductions he tested by experiment and found to be about right in the small number of cases he could try and as far as his very crude methods would allow. Very soon others took the matter up and it was found that the deductions held in every case examined. The more the methods of analysis improved the more exact the agreement became.

Since then other types of deduction from the atomic theory have been made and confirmed. Nevertheless, even towards the end of the nineteenth century there were philosophers of positivist views who looked with suspicion at the theory, largely, I believe, because it had been abused. Because, as mentioned already, atoms were supposed to be literally hard round things, like billiard balls, only smaller and less highly coloured. Nowadays the atomic theory is very firmly established, even though atoms are not quite so hard and round. At any rate, the old fallacies are avoided and even positivist philosophers no longer murmur against them. They have discovered that after all atoms are only "logical constructions" and quite respectable.

I think we must agree to the "Principle of Observability"; namely that no hypothetical entity or process is to be admitted to scientific theory unless it leads to consequences verifiable by experiment or other kind of observation; though two provisos should be added. The first has been mentioned already, namely that what can at any stage of progress be verified by observation depends upon the technique available for the purpose. No observational consequences of a hypothesis may be immediately apparent, but it may be a good hypothesis all the same, though obviously not so good as if they were apparent and verified.

The second proviso is rather more complicated. The most general

hypotheses of physics that cover all entities or processes whatsoever are often such that both from the hypothesis and its contradictory observable consequences follow, so that each is a definite hypothesis; the contradictory is not a mere blank. Thus, either matter is infinitely divisible or it is atomic; either there is absolute motion or not; either there is no limit to the precision with which the position and velocity of electrons can be determined or there is a limit. In each case observable consequences follow from either alternative, and if one is false the other is true. This is not so with more special hypotheses, from the contradictories of which nothing can as a rule be deduced. If the structural formula of a chemical compound is so and so, then the compound will have such and such properties. It does not have those properties, therefore its formula is not so and so. Here there is only blank negation except on the unlikely assumption that there is one and only one positive alternative formula. There may be no alternative thought of; there may be far too many. There are cases where it is best to compromise. A hypothesis may fail in some respects, but it may be better than nothing. Something unexpected may always turn up to solve the difficulty.

In conclusion, if positivism in its scientific aspect meant nothing more than this kind of critical attitude towards hypotheses, there would be nothing to say against it. But positivism has always meant much more. In fact it has meant phenomenalism too; the theory that the material world consists of nothing but sense data. Whatever the truth may be, this theory I am sure is false and the mother of a great family of fallacies. It is plausible because it appeals to what we imagine to be immediate, certain, and actual, and because we do not realize that the possible sense data it has to drag in are purely mythical.

SOME SIMPLE THOUGHTS ON FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Professor H. GOMPERZ.

The following considerations have been styled "simple thoughts" for two reasons.

In the first place I wish, at the very outset, to limit the field of discussion. Of course, a limited discussion is not likely to be recognized either as a complete or as a final one. But even at this price I wish to keep the question of Free-will clear of the great problems of Life and of Consciousness. The "mechanistic" or "physicalistic" view, according to which volition is only an epi-phenomenon attached to a physical process in the brain's cortex and therefore subject to the same necessity which determines every movement of an atom (although, maybe, not of an electron also), will not be discussed. The question whether biology may, or may not, be reduced to physics will remain entirely open. Atoms and molecules, the nerves and the brain, will not even be mentioned. Nor do I intend to enter upon a discussion of the "spiritualistic" view that holds volition to be a purely "mental," or "spiritual" phenomenon, not at all intimately bound up with any bodily processes, and therefore exempt from the laws by which these are determined. There will be no reference to states of consciousness, to laws of thought, nor even to motives (a most ambiguous term, in my opinion, apt to throw the whole subject into hopeless confusion). The question whether psychology may be deduced from physiology is supposed to remain open likewise. What I propose to do is to set aside the distinction between the psychical and the physical aspect of life altogether and to envisage man as a living unity, that is as an organism; volition as a function of that organism, namely as its reaction on, or response to, a given situation; and traits of character as habits of such reaction. In other words, I wish to take my stand on the point of view of biology, or behaviourism, or pragmatism, as you may be pleased to call it. Volition, then, will be considered as one of the phenomena of life. This, of course, entails a limitation of the field of discussion. Perhaps its limits will to many appear too narrow. But, anyhow, they are self-imposed and clearly recognized.

My other reason for confining myself to "simple thoughts" was my wish to reduce, as far as I could, things to their true proportions; to combat the one-sidedness of opposite and extreme theories and

to bring out the modest nucleus of truth which they mostly encompass; but also to reduce the importance of the whole problem to its true standard. Indeed, outside of the schools nobody bothers about free-will at all. Everybody knows that when, and as far as, he is not coerced he can do what he wants to do; that is to say, he can act according to his inclinations, which, however, depend on his inherited character on the one hand, and on his education and his personal experience on the other; and that, if he, indeed, is held responsible for his conduct (as far as this is not due to coercion), yet the race from which he has sprung and the environment in which he has been brought up and lived, are believed to share in this responsibility. And that is all that we know, and, moreover, that we can know, and, indeed, that we need to know—about the matter. We are also perfectly aware of what goes on within us when we deliberate about some doubtful point and at last come to a decision. And what we are, perhaps, not aware of, as, for instance, the bodily conditions or the subconscious states that may influence our decisions, could come to be known only by persistent and dispassionate research in a laboratory of physiology or psychology, and will never be discovered by philosophers speculating in their arm-chairs or at their desks. Indeed, I suspect that, from one point of view at least, the case of the problem of free-will is very much the same as that of the problem of the reality of the physical world. Students approach both problems hoping to learn something about facts; and then it turns out that it is all a question of terms. Whether the world is "real" depends upon what we mean by reality; and whether volition is free depends upon what we mean by freedom. And if we happen to use the term freedom in more than one sense in one and the same discussion, our points of view may thereby indeed be multiplied and variegated, but our answer to the question at issue will necessarily be involved in obscurity and even in contradiction. Let me begin, therefore, by saying that we may, I think, distinguish at least three meanings of the term freedom, as applied to volition. Using that term in its "everyday meaning," we shall have to ask: Are our volitions free, in the sense of not being coerced? Applying it in its "scientific" or "speculative meaning" we shall have to inquire: Are they free in the sense that they cannot possibly be predicted? And starting with its "moral meaning," we shall wish to know whether they are free in the sense that we may reasonably be held responsible for them. And now let us consider these three questions one by one.

I

Is will free in the everyday sense of this term?

Not much discussion seems to be requisite on this point, since

our volitions, when not due to coercion, are, in this sense, free by definition. Indeed, this is, no doubt, the original meaning of the term "freedom." It was devised to designate non-coercion; how, then, could volition not due to coercion be anything but free?

The only point to be emphasized just here is this, that freedom in this sense is absolutely compatible with determinism even in its strictest form. Determinists contend that volitions are necessarily determined by the situation and the character of the agent. Now it is coercion that does not permit us to act as our character, or our nature, would prompt us to do, whereas acting freely means acting in a way agreeing with, or in conformity to, our character. Indeed, it is free action, and free action only, that expresses character and enables it to manifest itself. How then could there be any incompatibility between our acting freely and our acting in the way determined by our character?

The notion that determinism might be incompatible with freedom in the everyday sense of that term rests on the assumption that determination always and everywhere implies coercion. Now this assumption seems to have sprung from a twofold misconception: it is likely to have arisen out of an untenable view concerning the nature of determination, and it may then have been corroborated by a wrong interpretation of a particular group of experiences.

"*b* is determined by *a*" simply means "*b* depends on *a* according to a general rule," and it means nothing else. The angles of a triangle are "determined" by the ratio of its sides; that is to say, they depend on it, according to the general rules of Trigonometry. In cases, indeed, in which it is essential to the relation of *a* and *b*, that is to say in which it is stated by the general rule that *a* must precede *b*, determination is called causation; *a* is styled the cause and *b* the effect. This is the scientific concept of causation, correctly, on the whole, explained by David Hume two hundred years ago. Yet Hume was wrong, I think, with regard to two minor points. He took the alleged connection between determination and coercion to be merely a psychological one; being accustomed to witness *b* taking place after *a*, we feel forced to expect it as soon as *a* has taken place, and then we falsely project this feeling of coercion or necessity into *b* itself, as if this were "necessarily produced" by *a*. But the "necessity" of *b* is not only psychological, it is—and this, I suppose, is much more essential—logical likewise; given the ratio of the sides, we "must" assume the angles to be such and such, "if" we wish to avoid error and provided the rules of Trigonometry are correct. And in the same sense, given a certain temperature, we "must" expect the quicksilver in the thermometer to rise to such and such a point of the scale. Moreover, Hume was of opinion that when we allege *b* to be "necessarily produced" by *a*, such a statement lacks

all basis in experience, inasmuch as it is supposed to state anything over and above the fact that *b* regularly follows *a* and that we, therefore, feel forced to expect *b* to ensue every time that *a* has taken place. Hume thought that "to produce necessarily" really means nothing at all. But this was a mistake. Indeed, it means something, and the trouble is not that it means too little, but that it means too much, namely that it implies something not always clearly conceived when the phrase is employed. It implies that there is something in *a* (the antecedent) analogous to the effort experienced by us when we produce, or bring about, something ourselves; and that there is something in *b* (the consequent) analogous to the passivity experienced by us when some change is produced, or brought about, in ourselves against, or at least without, our will. Now, in all the cases in which *a* or *b* is the function of a living being, it is a perfectly legitimate inference that there must be something like effort connected with the cause, and something like passivity connected with the effect, and it is only in the realm of the Inanimate that the applicability of these concepts and the validity of that inference becomes doubtful. For, although a famous scientist once defined energy as what remains of the sensation of effort when the sensation of effort is abstracted from, it is not easy to see just what an unexperienced effort or an unexperienced passivity might be conceived to be. Certainly it is only natural to suppose that when the wind bends a twig there must be in it something analogous to the effort which I experience when doing the same thing, and that when it carries away a leaf there must be in the leaf something analogous to the passivity experienced by me when I suffer the same fate. Indeed, suppositions like these are fundamental in mythology and essential in poetry, and it is only in science that the question of their utility has to be raised. I do not mean to say, however, that even here the answer to this question must be absolutely negative. It seems to me that even in science effort and passivity may often be used very conveniently as symbols for regularity, and for a very simple reason. That *b* follows *a* according to a general rule means, of course, that *b* follows *a* in the same way in which b_1 follows a_1, b_2 a_2, and so forth. Now the analogy of *b*, *a* to b_1-a_1, b_2-a_2 . . . is not in any way expressed in *b*-*a* itself, but must be stated separately and in addition to the mere fact that *b*, here and now, follows *a*, whereas the notion of effort may be incorporated in that of *a* itself, as also the notion of passivity in that of *b*. In other words, thinking of *a* as of an active cause and of *b* as of a passive effect saves us the trouble of adding, as a second thought, that the relation of *b* to *a* corresponds to a general rule, and this mode of conceiving that relation might therefore, speaking generally, be considered as a convenient and harmless symbolism, if only it

were really harmless and did not, at one particular point, create the delusive semblance of a metaphysical problem where there is really no problem at all. This point is just free or non-coerced volition, or, to speak less technically, spontaneous effort. To state that I do something spontaneously, or of my own accord, let us say because I feel inclined, or because I deem it right, to do it; such a statement most certainly does not imply any opinion on the question whether this action of mine depends on my feeling of inclination, or on my ideas of right and wrong, according to a general rule, that is to say it leaves the question entirely open whether my action is "determined" in any way, or not. Let us assume, then, for a moment, and for the sake of argument only, that it were so determined. Such an assumption in itself entails no intellectual difficulty at all. Why should not spontaneous action depend on certain inclinations or ideas in the same way in which, for instance, the movements of a musician in an orchestra depend on those of the conductor? But as soon as you try to apply to this case of determination the symbolism of effort and passivity, you become involved in a most puzzling contradiction. To conceive my action as determined you must, according to that symbolism, consider it as passive or coerced; and yet, in itself, it is unmistakably experienced as spontaneous. And evidently it cannot be passive and spontaneous at one and the same time. No doubt, to a considerable extent, the so-called problem of free-will is only a conceptual expression of the feeling of embarrassment and perplexity of those who find themselves entangled in this apparent contradiction. But in truth this arises merely out of the improper use of the symbolism in question. Give it up, or use it only where it can do no harm, and the difficulty vanishes altogether. Volitions may be determined, that is to say they may depend on certain conditions according to certain rules, and yet they may be entirely free from all and every coercion. In other words, they may be "free" in the everyday sense of this term. Indeed, between "determination" and "coercion" there is no logical connection at all. When a storm throws me to the ground, my fall is both determined and coerced. When a planet revolves in a certain orbit, its motion is determined, but neither coerced nor free. When I act in conformity to my inclinations or to my convictions, my action may perhaps be determined, but it is most certainly free.

The arbitrary notion that determination involves coercion and that, therefore, it is incompatible with freedom in the everyday sense of that term would not, however, have come to spread so widely and to be engrafted so firmly on the minds of thinkers, if it had not seemed to be confirmed by a certain group of facts. There are, indeed, cases in which a man's mind is divided within itself and in

which, therefore, the realization of one of its aspirations seems both to determine his action and to defeat other aspirations opposed to it, in a compulsory and even a violent way. Thus a man may, by habit or passion, be driven to do something repugnant to himself, and whereof he afterwards repents. Or his determination to achieve a certain end may force upon him some measure, indispensable as a means to that end, but most undesirable in itself. In both cases he is not unlikely to say later on that he had not been able to act as he would have been inclined to do, and that his will had, by the habit, the passion, or the consideration in question, been not merely determined, but coerced as well. But then, the man who expresses himself thus makes use of a fiction, and he does not do so without a definite end in view. He speaks as if his character had been all on the right side, or on the side agreeable to his wishes, and as if the habit, the passion, or his determination to attain to a certain end were alien forces by which his real self had been overpowered. But then this is nonsense. It was *his* habit, *his* passion, or *his* resolution to attain to that end, by which his act was determined, it was part of his own character that was at fault or that overruled his other aspirations, and since it was this part that prevailed we may even say that in these cases also it was after all his character that determined his volition and that, if there was any coercion going on, it was part of his own nature that was coerced by another, and not his will that was coerced by his inclination. It is quite true, of course, that no precise boundary line can be drawn between a case like this and that of intimidation from without. The end in view that forces a man to adopt a measure repugnant to him in itself may simply be his wish not to be shot, and the measure repugnant to him may be the delivering up of $100,000 to a gangster. In such a case, indeed, the determining motive will also be a coercive one; but then, as far as this view of the case is correct, the act will be due to coercion and therefore will, by definition, not be a free act at all. Whether an act resulting from intimidation should be styled free or coerced, is a question of terminology. If we consider a man's wish to preserve his life as an ultimate fact not subject to any further conditions, we may, indeed, rightly say that the act was forced upon him; if we consider the preservation of a man's life as an end freely preferred by him to other ends, we may as justly style that same act a free one. It cannot be denied therefore that the boundary-line between freedom and coercion may be drawn differently according to the different points of view adopted. But this fact does not in any way affect the statement that determination, as long as it does *not* involve coercion, is perfectly compatible with freedom in the everyday sense of that term. How, indeed, could they be incompatible? Saying that a man's action is determined by his

character is tantamount to saying that he acts as he wants to act; saying that he is coerced is tantamount to saying that he must act as he does not want to act. How, then, can the former of these statements be pretended to imply the latter?

II

Is will free in the scientific or speculative sense of the term? That is to say, is it true that volition cannot possibly be predicted? If determination does not in any way imply coercion, but merely conformity to general and immutable rules, then the only method to test the tenet of determinism is to inquire whether human volitions can be predicted when the conditions are given on which they depend. If they can, there is no pretext for denying that volition is "determined" and subject to "law" just like any other action or reaction in nature; if they cannot, there is no meaning in the assertion that volition is "determined" at all. The issue, then, seems clear. It may not, perhaps, be of any particular importance in practice, but it certainly does not appear to lack significance from a scientific or speculative point of view.

No question, however, admits of a definite answer, affirmative or negative, as long as its terms are not clearly defined. Now, the question whether something "can be predicted" is not free from a certain ambiguity. What this refers to can easily be shown by distinguishing the "scientific" from the "speculative" point of view.

By "scientific predictions" I mean real predictions, predictions actually made by real men in the world of real experience, in short, predictions in real life. Now when we consult the books on the free-will controversy we get the impression as if all parties were agreed on one point, namely, that prediction of human volitions and actions in this sense is impossible. And yet we make such predictions every hour of our waking life, nay, we even do still more, we act on these predictions. We ask people questions, expecting them to answer, we sell goods to them, expecting them to pay, and we pay them, expecting them to work; we offer them rewards and threaten to fine them, expecting them to look out for profits and, as far as they can, to avoid losses; and we try to fill positions of confidence with reliable men and to withhold them from the unreliable. Does not that look as if a first-sight case for determinism might indeed be made out?

The trouble, of course, is that our predictions very often do not come true. People will act unexpectedly and even unreasonably, they deceive our hopes and sometimes they do not even justify our fears. But then, such failures are not peculiar to behaviourist psychology. In meteorology, for instance, predictions that do not

come true do not seem to be anyway less numerous. Yet that does not induce us to maintain that the weather cannot possibly be predicted nor to infer that the winds and the clouds are free agents and that that is just the grand thing about them. Now, why do we refrain from all such conclusions? Because we have not as yet given up all hopes of discovering laws that might enable us to predict the weather with greater precision. That is to say, we hope to be able to "measure" certain features of the meteorological situation and thereby to attach certain numbers to this situation, and then to find out whether certain "equations"—assumed at first as hypotheses, later on to be checked by experience—do not connect the numbers attached to the weather of the preceding day to those attached to that of the following, so that then we might, by calculation, predict to-morrow's weather from to-day's. Now this procedure which substitutes, for instance, for concepts such as "warm," "oppressive," or "damp," figures gathered from scales in thermometers, barometers, or hygroscopes, and then seeks to connect these figures by equations may, speaking generally, be styled a procedure of "quantification." And indeed the method of quantification is the only one adopted in all the sciences wherever a degree of precision higher than the one yet attained to is aimed at. Determinists also might therefore be expected to proceed in the same way with regard to the conditions and effects of volitions if seriously interested in the prediction of the latter. Nor is it anyway evident *a priori* that such an attempt must necessarily fail. Types, at least of character, of situations, and of conduct might perhaps be established, and numbers attached to them, and then hypotheses might be formed and checked by experience that might enable us to formulate a law stating, for instance, that "A character of type No. 13 in a situation of type No. 61 always posits conduct of type No. 260." If an attempt to formulate laws of this or eventually even of a more satisfactory nature succeeded, then, indeed, determinism might claim to be a scientific theory, on a par with other scientific theories established on a basis of experience. In fact, if predictions of any degree of precision, verified by the event, were forthcoming, the question would be settled once for all, and indeterminism would be silenced for all time to come. This is just the way in which other sciences proceed. Take Astronomy. The true way of proving that eclipses can be precisely predicted is to predict them. If an astronomer said that he, indeed, could do no such thing, but that he was sure an omniscient being could, nobody would pay special attention to him. And yet, so at least it seems to me, the attitude of most determinists is just this. Indeed, if determinism claims to be a scientific theory, the issue really hinges on the question of quantification. If and as far as quantification of the conditions and the effects

of volition is possible, precise predictions with regard to volitions are, at least in principle, possible also. If and as far as it is not, precise prediction of volitions, too, is inconceivable, at least by human intelligences, and science can hardly be concerned with any other.

Now, whether quantification of this kind is possible, I know not; what I know is that it has hardly ever been tried and that determinists, in particular, do not seem to feel any obligation to attempt it. As long, therefore, as not even any serious effort is made towards this end, I feel entitled to suppose that there is no prospect of attaining to it. But this is tantamount to saying that determinism, considered as a scientific theory, must be given up. And we shall see presently that speculation will not come to its rescue, if science forsakes it.

Let us now turn to the problem of freedom in the speculative sense of this term, that is to say to the question: Could volitions be predicted by a being that knew all about their conditions, that is to say by a being omniscient with regard to the past and to the present, but ignorant of the future?

The determinist's answer, of course, is that if such a being knew all about a man's character and about the situation in which he finds himself, as also about all the laws that rule life and its phenomena, it would be able precisely to predict what he was going to do. Now, my contention is that this answer, analysed more closely, turns out to be unmeaning since the knowledge of the premises supposed to be given really implies the knowledge of the conclusion alleged to be inferred from them. In order to show this, let me begin by asking: What is meant by "knowing all about a man's character"? Evidently, knowing how he behaves in any given situation. But then, the present situation, I mean the situation in which the volition to be predicted is expected to ensue, is itself a given situation. In order to know "all" about a man's character, therefore, even an omniscient being would have to know not only how he had behaved in all past situations but, besides, how he was going to behave in the present situation also, that is to say just in that situation the effect of which on him that being is supposed to be able to predict. So that the theory of speculative determinism really amounts to saying that a being that knew how a man was going to conduct himself in a given situation would, indeed, know how he was going to conduct himself in that situation, or that if it knew all about a man's character, it would, indeed, know all about it—which is, of course, nonsense, or a truism, as we may be pleased to call it.

The determinist will, of course, retort that this is not what he meant. What he meant was that an omniscient being would be able to predict a man's future conduct with the utmost precision, if only it knew all about his present situation, his conduct in the past,

and the laws of human conduct generally. Since knowing all this, it would be able to judge of what the man was going to do now by what he and by what other men of the same or of a similar character had done in the same situation or in similar situations. But then, these two terms, "the same" and "similar," refer, in truth, to two cases which, from our point of view, differ widely from each other.

To take the case of mere similarity first, it is, of course, quite true that in science "laws of nature" do not presuppose identity, but only similarity, of causes as well as of effects. When I say that the force of attraction is in the inverse ratio of the square of the distance of the objects attracted, I do not at all imply that there are, in nature, any two distances or any two forces, exactly equal: the distance may in the one case be 10 and the force 1/100 and in the other case the distance may be 11 and the force 1/121. But how is it that this satisfies me and that I do not postulate equality? It is because I do not stop at a vague similarity, but am able to attach to this term a meaning perfectly precise, namely that of an equal ratio. But equal ratios presuppose precise figures, that is measurement and quantification. Where these are not available mere similarity, without any more definite indication, does not enable us to make precise predictions. Perhaps we might, for all that, in some cases, be entitled to say that where the causes are similar the effects are likely to be similar too. But that would leave an enormous latitude, and would be absolutely incompatible with any degree of precision. Now, only one of two alternatives can be true. Either the conditions of volition can be quantified; then, as far as they can, determinism is a scientific theory and can be tested by experience, and in that case all speculations about omniscient beings and what they can do or can not do are superfluous and idle; or those conditions can not be quantified, and then "similarity" remains a vague and indefinite term, and mere similarity, in this sense, could never enable even an omniscient being to predict anything with any degree of precision.

There remains, then, the case of identical characters and identical situations. Could an omniscient being predict what a man of a given character will do in a given situation by inferring this from what that same man or from what other men absolutely like him have done in that very same situation? To this I answer that there are no two men absolutely alike and that even one and the same man can never experience one and the same situation more than once. The first of these statements will hardly be controverted, since it is only another way of saying that every human being is an individuality or personality and can never be met with more than once. It is the second of the above statements that may deserve and even require some further elucidation.

Speaking generally, a situation recurring can never be quite the

same situation over again, if for no other reason, for these two decisive reasons: (1) that having already been experienced before, it cannot have quite the same meaning to the agent now that it had when first experienced; and (2) that the agent's character having been exposed to the influence of the first experience, can now no longer be quite the same that it was then. Indeed, this statement does not apply to man alone. The significance of function on the one hand and of fatigue on the other is common to all animal tissue, and even, to some extent, to some inanimate bodies. A spring may seem to react on pressure in an absolutely identical way a hundred times. The day will come, nevertheless, when it will begin to react somewhat differently on the "very same situation," I mean the day when its elasticity will begin to relax and even that other day when it will break altogether. It might, perhaps, be argued that the difference between the hundredth and the hundred and first experience of the "same" situation will be very much less marked than that between the first and the second, and it might be added that, if habit makes any difference in a man's response to a situation, that difference could make itself felt in the sense of enhanced regularity and uniformity only, so that an inference from the thousandth to the thousand and first reaction ought to be so much the safer. But this would be a fallacy. For if it is true that we get accustomed to things, it is no less true that we also get sick of them. And experience amply proves that other forces, too, work in the same direction. As time goes on, even temptations lose their charm; passions cool down; the claims of reason and the pressure of facts may make themselves felt. A young man may have neglected his studies for years, but it does not follow that this must go on for ever; he very often sets to work at last. Even an old rake often settles down between forty and fifty and perhaps marries his housekeeper, and then the people say: Who would have thought so? Even habitual drunkards sometimes go to an asylum, and in religion also sudden conversions occur. What, then, is my conclusion? You can never tell what may be the possibilities latent in a man until they have had occasion to manifest themselves. Certainly a man will always act as he is bound to do, being the man he is; but just what kind of a man he is you can never infer from his past alone; there may be in him some things, some possibilities of reaction, that just show themselves for the first time now. Looking backward you will be perfectly right in saying: He could not act otherwise, it was his nature that manifested itself in his act. And yet, in a sense, when you say that, your thoughts move in a circle: you first infer the agent's character from his act, and then, conversely, his act from his character. For you could not have known "all about his character" before knowing how he would react in just this new situation also.

This may be illustrated, I think, by a perfectly parallel case. Lagrange has proved that any curve whatsoever may be reduced to an equation. When, therefore, we are able to survey the curve as a whole, we can always consider it as the necessary expression of that equation. Every little section will be perfectly determined by it. But as long as only a section of the curve is given, we cannot predict how it is going to continue. If it continues one way, we shall have to refer it to equation 1; if the other way, to equation 2. In both cases we shall, on looking backward, be able to conceive it as the necessary expression of its law; but just which is "its law" we shall only know when it has reached its last point. So with life also. Character is its law, and of its law it will turn out to have been, in every single moment, the true expression; but what this law was even an omniscient being could only tell when life has reached its goal. And even then it might, perhaps, be contended that unexpected features of character might have come to light, if fate had steered that life through other seas. Anyhow, even an omniscient being could not predict future volitions with absolute precision from the knowledge of situations and characters, for there is no complete knowledge of character as long as this has not been observed reacting on all the situations through which it may pass.

Speculative determinism, then, moves in a circle; that is why it cannot come to the rescue of scientific determinism, if that breaks down.

III

A third question remains to be discussed. Is will free in the moral sense of that term? That is to say, Is it reasonable to hold men responsible for their volitions? Here, then, freedom is attached to responsibility by definition. If, and as far as, holding to account is rational, there is freedom also. If, and as far as it is not, we shall be entitled to speak, in the same moral sense, of determinism—which term, in this connection, however, will only point to an influence exempting volition from responsibility. To what extent, then, is responsibility reasonable?

Among philosophers there seems to be a widespread opinion to the effect that responsibility is something very sacred and very mysterious and closely bound up with freedom in the speculative sense of that term. But I, for one, cannot share in this view. To me responsibility appears to be rather a simple thing. Its nature as well as the conditions of its rationality may, I think, be easily ascertained, and it is bound up with freedom, not at all in the speculative, but exclusively in the everyday sense of that word. But first of all two questions must, here also, be carefully distinguished: What is

the meaning of "holding a man responsible"? And when is it reasonable to do so?

Holding a man responsible or accountable, in the only sense that can be relevant to this discussion, seems to me to be only an abbreviating expression for three couples of terms, namely for Punishment and Reward, Blame and Praise, Self-reproach and Self-satisfaction. Now, psychologically, self-reproach is only blame projected into a man's own consciousness; blame is only punishment spiritualized; punishment is only revenge approved of by the community; and revenge is only defence prolonged. Indeed, if we picture to ourselves a man who has just succeeded in repelling an act of aggression and who now, having run after the aggressor, knocks him down and calls him names, we feel at once how closely defence and revenge, chastising and chiding are bound up with each other, and how the three last-named phenomena originate in a blind instinct of retaliation. And the same holds good with regard to self-satisfaction, praise, reward, and tenderness, the three first-named springing, all of them, from the no less blind instinct of requital. But when is it reasonable to give free vent to these instincts.?

The first condition is, indeed, that the actions by which these instincts express themselves be just, that is to say, such as might proceed from an impartial judge, namely that they do not smite the innocent nor benefit the undeserving, that they keep up a due proportion between retaliation and offence, requital and merit, and that they proceed in an orderly manner in no way endangering the public peace. But this is not enough. If retaliation and requital were unreasonable in themselves, they would not become reasonable by being administered impartially and peacefully. Indeed, the main end of reasonable retaliation and requital is undoubtedly the promotion of desirable and the checking of undesirable conduct. Punishment, for instance, serves this end in more ways than one: by disabling the offender to inflict further harm, by tending to make him reform and by deterring him as well as others from offending again. If, however, to hold a man responsible for his acts is reasonable only when and as far as desirable conduct is thereby promoted or undesirable conduct checked, three remarkable consequences follow.

(1) Responsibility is not reasonable when the agent was not and could not have been aware of the moral significance of his act, nor when that act was not and could not have been influenced by such awareness, that is to say, in the cases of ignorance or coercion. In these cases, therefore, the will, too, is, by definition, not "free" in the moral sense of that term.

(2) Responsibility is more or less reasonable in proportion as the

effects of retaliation or requital can be more or less precisely foreseen and predicted. If, therefore, conduct could not be foreseen and predicted at all, responsibility would be utterly unreasonable and freedom in the moral sense would be non-existent. It cannot be true, therefore, that responsibility is anyway bound up with indeterminism—that is to say, with freedom in the scientific or speculative sense of that term. That it is not becomes manifest by another consideration also. If a man could not reasonably be held responsible for conduct that might have been foreseen and foretold, all purely reasonable conduct would be exempt from responsibility. For as far as conduct is prompted by reason only, it can indeed be predicted. All other things being equal, every rational being will choose the shortest or the easiest way as well as the better or the cheaper ware and the safer or the more profitable investment. In such a case the choice can indeed be predicted. But will anybody maintain that therefore the agent is not responsible for his choice? Moreover, speaking quite generally, why should not a man be held responsible for his conduct when this is the expression of his character and of his character only, so that it could have been predicted by anybody who "knew all about his character"—if only this phrase had any definite meaning at all? For the notion that he might have been coerced by his character has been considered long ago and had to be rejected as absurd.

(3) From our point of view, however, the most important consequence is another one. If to hold a man responsible is reasonable only when and as far as desirable conduct is thereby promoted and undesirable conduct checked, it follows that it will be more reasonable in proportion as that end is more fully attained to. Now this is very often the case when responsibility is divided among more persons than one. Take the case of instigation. B has acted, but A has instigated him to act. Evidently it would be unreasonable to hold only one or the other to account since we desire to check instigation as well as action. But now let us consider the case of one man instigating many others. B, C, D . . . have acted, but they have all of them been instigated by A—say, to spread a malignant slander or to indulge in the use of a pernicious dope. What will be the rational course to take? No doubt we may have to hold B, C, D . . . to account, since we wish to stop people from repeating slander and from indulging in the use of dopes. But the effect will in any case be a comparatively poor one, since in this way instigation itself will not be checked, but will go on all the same. The truly rational course therefore will be to lay the chief stress on the responsibility of A: if we succeed in stopping instigation, the evil as a whole will be stopped. But now let us pass from the instigator to the educator, the teacher, the father. If these exercise an influence

on the young that we consider undesirable, it will indeed be indispensable to hold the latter responsible too, for being exposed to an evil influence they ought, as far as possible, to be subjected to beneficial counter-influences likewise. But by far the greater part of the forthcoming responsibility will have to rest with the educator, the teacher, the parent: if we can influence them, what we do will indirectly affect a whole generation. But what holds good for the educators will also be applicable to the environment as a whole: the preachers heard and the authors read by the young and, indeed, by the people generally will have to bear their share in the responsibility for what is done or omitted by their hearers and readers, and their share will certainly not be the smaller one. But we cannot stop short even at this point. What holds good for men, holds good for social conditions also. Take the case of the mother who steals food for her children in a time of distress. It may not be entirely unreasonable to hold her responsible to some extent, for even in times of distress we do not desire theft to spread. But the main responsibility will lie with those people and those institutions that have caused or that have not prevented distress; if we can stop these, a thousand cases of theft will automatically be prevented. And what has now been said about social conditions may even be extended to inherited proclivities. It may, indeed, be indispensable to punish the criminal himself, but the responsibility of the ancestor whose criminal instincts he has inherited will be at least as great.

And now let us remember that freedom in the moral sense of this term was attached to responsibility by definition. What follows? Every man whose conduct is not due to ignorance or coercion will indeed (in the moral sense of the word) be "free" to some extent: but his freedom may be relatively insignificant when compared with the "power of determination" acting upon him (that is to say, with the influences tending to exempt him from responsibility). On the other hand he will, it is true, never be able to emancipate himself completely from these "determining" forces, but he may succeed to some extent, and his freedom will never be completely annihilated. Man will always be free within a certain sphere, but this sphere may be larger or smaller and will never be wholly unlimited. Indeed, the individual in his relation to the influences to which he is exposed and that are due to inheritance and to environment, may be likened to a man swimming in a fast stream. His motion will in some measure always be due to his own will and to his own strength, and if he is a very skilful swimmer he may reach his goal in spite of the current, but to some extent his motion will always be due to the current also. What then? In the moral sense of these terms man is never entirely free and never completely

determined. The extent to which he is free varies in proportion to the independence of his character. It is this that determines the measure of freedom allotted to him. But never is this measure as small as determinists, and never is it as great as indeterminists, would have it. Truth, in this case also, is a mean.

"BOTH GOD AND MAN"

J. C. GRAHAM

"ALL verbal forms of statement," says Whitehead, "that have been long before the world disclose ambiguities, and sometimes the ambiguities strike at the very heart of the meaning. The effective sense in which a doctrine has been held in the past cannot be determined by a logical analysis of statements made in ignorance of the logical trap. . . . Religion collapses unless its main positions command immediacy of assent."

In illustration of the first of these pronouncements Whitehead instances the Christian doctrine of Grace, but perhaps a more conspicuous example is the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. This doctrine is epitomized in the statement that Jesus Christ was both God and Man, a formula which, though not verbally consonant with the Nicene Creed, is held, on Ecumenical authority, to be what the Nicene Creed implies. The formula is susceptible of more than one interpretation, but the Catholic exegesis is that our Lord was at one and the same time God and Man in an identical sense—a sense, that is, which identifies Him with God, and simultaneously identifies Him with Man. "Our Lord claimed to be both God and Man; it is a mystery; I do not understand it; but I believe it." These words, uttered with obvious sincerity by a popular preacher, may be regarded as typical of the orthodox attitude. The only relevant comment to be made upon it is that our Lord made no such claim, that we do not get rid of a contradiction by calling it a mystery, nor is it possible to believe what we do not understand. The orthodox doctrine, in short, is more than ambiguous, it is confessedly unintelligible; and we may well wonder how so strange a tenet could have originated. Let us, then, glance briefly at its history.

To His Jewish followers, Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of prophecy. Whether or not He regarded Himself in that light is, as we know, the cardinal issue in modern Jesuology. Messiahship, however, did not imply Godhead. Our Lord's apotheosis was a subsequent development due to the syncretism of Judaic and pagan ideas. The Pauline doctrine of the incarnation of the Holy Spirit, and the Johannine identification of the Messiah with the Logos of Greek metaphysical speculation marked definite stages of the process. The term "Logos" (the "Intelligence" or "Creative Activity" of God) had been already personified by Philo as a "Second God" or "Son of God." The long controversy in the early Church concerning the

relationship of the Son, or Logos, or Incarnate Word, to the Father-God came to a crisis at the beginning of the fourth century when the teaching of Arius, that the Son was subordinate to the Father, was opposed by Athanasius, who taught that Christ was God in the fullest sense. The decision of the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) in favour of Athanasius did not, however, settle the question, and controversy continued to rage round the problem of the two natures in one person, until the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) declared the orthodox doctrine of the Church to be that Christ was both God and Man. "The history of the whole controversy," says Dr. Temple, "represents the bankruptcy of Greek patristic theology." Harnack said: "We cannot think realistically about the doctrine of the *deus factus homo* without thinking ourselves out of it." But *deus factus homo* is not the proper expression: it is *deus ipse homo* that is conceptually impossible.

In the light of historical criticism and research, it would be difficult, I think, for any unbiased mind to avoid the conclusion that our Lord neither foresaw nor desired the religion to which His life and teaching gave birth; "it never entered His head." Yet of that religion, in spite of its doctrinal vagaries, He has been the omphalos, the "seed"—in Dr. Major's metaphor—of all this flowering, and looking back across the centuries at the unique sanctity of that Life, we can still say, with Zacharias, "the day-spring from on high hath visited us."

But nothing can be farther removed from that day-spring than the Chalcedonian Decree. It cannot be too strongly insisted that this dogma violates the laws of thought, and is no more than a meaningless collocation of terms. The view that it is possible to "believe" it rests, we must conclude, upon a fundamental misconception of the meaning of belief.

On the other hand, we are faced with the indisputable fact that millions of human beings have professed to believe the dogma with passionate sincerity. How, then, it may be urged, is it possible to maintain that it is incredible? To any such criticism Newman has furnished the answer. Belief is one thing; the profession of belief, *however sincere*, is another. We are unfortunately able to persuade ourselves that we believe various doctrines, especially those involving ambiguity, by the simple process of misunderstanding them. While the will or desire to believe cannot enable us to really believe, it can certainly convince us that we do. A familiar example of this is afforded by the doctrine of what is called "Free-Will," which, having never really grasped its meaning, so many profess quite conscientiously to believe. But the affirmation, in good faith, of belief in propositions which admittedly we do not understand, can be due only to misapprehension of what Newman called "the grammar of assent."

Nevertheless, the criticism is one to which the greatest possible weight must be attached. We are dealing with a formula held sacred by a great multitude. It would clearly be wrong to impugn it lightly, out of a mere love of paradox, or, indeed, from any other motive than zeal for religious truth. But given that motive, it would be still more wrong not to impugn it. "To acquiesce in discrepancy" —if I may again quote Whitehead—"is destructive of candour and of moral cleanliness. It belongs to the self-respect of the intellect to pursue every tangle of thought to its final unravelment. If you check that impulse you will get no religion . . . from an awakened thoughtfulness." I believe that the doctrine of the Incarnation embodies a truth of fundamental significance and value. But I do not think we can fail to realize that, whatever may have been the case in the past, the form in which the doctrine is presented liturgically and homiletically by the Church is, to-day, one of the main reasons for the declining influence of the Christian religion among educated people.

The canonical doctrine of our Lord's person is, in a word, contradictory; and in order that we may be perfectly clear about this, it may be well to recall the First and Second Laws of Thought:

(1) The Principle of Identity.
Everything is what it is, and not some other thing. (A horse is a horse and not an apple.)
(2) The Principle of Contradiction.
A thing cannot be both what it is and something else. (A horse cannot be both a horse and an apple.)

A contradictory proposition is *ipso facto* unintelligible, and since we are unable to predicate either truth or untruth of the unintelligible, belief is ruled out—*cadit quaestio*. But the matter is not so easily disposed of. It is not disputed that the Chalcedonian formula is logically contradictory, but it is held that it is not, or may not be, "metaphysically" contradictory; it is not disputed that it is unintelligible, but it is claimed that though unintelligible it is credible. The problem, therefore, resolves itself into the question of the credibility of the unintelligible.

Can we believe what we do not understand? To believe is to recognize as true, truth is an attribute of propositions that are accordant with fact, and propositions are statements or judgments consisting of subject and predicate—statements in which we say something about something. If anyone asks me whether I believe that rollochites constantly sibble, the logical reply is: "I do not know what rollochites are, nor do I know what sibbling is, and as I do not understand the proposition, I am unable to express any opinion about the truth of it." The truth of the statement that we cannot

believe what we do not understand seems, indeed, obvious enough; but many people appear to have a difficulty in assenting to it. "I believe in God," they say, "but I do not understand Him." But "in God" is not a proposition. Truth, and therefore belief, let me repeat, are predicable only of propositions. The proposition implied by the phrase "in God" is probably "God exists" or "God is just and merciful," or some similar statement, and these propositions are quite intelligible. Every credible statement must convey at least some meaning to our minds, and it is this meaning that gains our acquiescence. Nobody, I presume, would argue in so many words that we can believe a proposition that conveys no meaning to us, but that is what the assertion that we can believe what we do not understand comes to. Possibly someone may still object that the proposition "God exists" is one that we do not understand, since we do not understand God. But, once more, we do not believe "God," "God" is not a proposition; the proposition is "God exists." If what is meant is that God is a being whose nature is beyond our comprehension, that is a perfectly intelligible proposition. We do claim, however, to understand Him to some extent, or the term "God" would be meaningless, instead of being, as it is to many of us, more pregnant with meaning than any other that we know.

Dr. Harris, in *Creeds or No Creeds*, says:

"Any doctrine that contains a plain contradiction must be false. On the other hand . . . the created universe is so mysterious and involves so many apparent contradictions that we ought not to be surprised if we find mysteries and apparent contradictions in God."

If it were not impossible to doubt Dr. Harris's sincerity it would be difficult to acquit him of sophistry. This is the kind of expedient that Whitehead likens to throwing a lighted match into a powder-magazine—you blow up the whole caboodle. The contention that propositions which present themselves to our minds as plain logical contradictions may be only "apparent contradictions in God" leaves us no means of distinguishing real contradictions. Can we really suppose that God would stultify us in this way?

The reader may, indeed, be puzzled to know what the phrase "apparent contradictions in God" can be supposed to mean. Certainly no one has ever discovered contradictions in God, real or "apparent," and we may be quite sure that there are none. Dr. Harris cannot mean that a thing might appear to be both what it is and something else—that a horse, for instance, might appear to be both a horse and an apple. That would be a real, not an apparent, contradiction. The appearance of a horse is as much a "thing" cognitively as the horse itself, and a horse-appearance could not be both a horse-appearance and an apple-appearance.

What then is Dr. Harris's real meaning? It is, I fear, that what is a contradiction to us may not be a contradiction to God, and if he

means that he is talking nonsense. The term "contradiction" is one of our own coining. It is the name we give to the infringement of a particular logical principle, and can have no other meaning, whether for God or for anyone else, than that which we give it. And if we believe, as we do, that our reasoning faculty is God-given we may regard the principle itself as divinely revealed.

Somewhat analogous to Dr. Harris's contention is that of the Archbishop of York. Dr. Temple apparently holds that contradictions may be resolved by spiritualizing them. "The breakdown" (of patristic Christology) "was inevitable because the spirit cannot be expressed in terms of substance at all . . . the doctrine of substance is in essence materialistic." But "spirit" and "substance" are as irrelevant to the problem as the song the sirens sang. The issue is concerned with "things," i.e. objects of thought, and the question is whether a thing, be it spiritual, material, or even imaginary, can be conceived to be both what it is and something else. (Incidentally, I am sure that Dr. Temple is quite wrong in identifying substance with matter, but that is another story.)

In his great treatise, *Nature, Man and God*, Dr. Temple reaffirms his faith in the Chalcedonian dogma, and almost makes a virtue of not understanding it: "The psychology of the God-Man must necessarily be beyond our grasp; any theory which professed to understand it would be thereby condemned"—and, by the same token, we may add, any creed which professed to believe it. "The difficulty is no proof that the alleged event did not occur"—nor any proof that it did! The whole argument is a *petitio*—it assumes the very point at issue. The concept of the God-Man being logically untenable, it is idle to talk about his psychology.

The proposition that events may occur which we do not understand suffers from the ambiguity of idiom. Properly speaking, intelligibility and unintelligibility are predicable only of propositions. "This is a horse" is an intelligible proposition; "This is both a horse and an apple" is an unintelligible proposition. When we say that we cannot understand such statements we mean that we cannot make head or tail of them, they are nonsense to us. But when we say that we cannot understand an event, such as a noise, or a sudden light, or an action, we mean, not that it is nonsense to us, but that it is something of which we do not know the cause or do not know the purpose. And these propositions are intelligible enough, and may quite well be true.

If Dr. Temple means that propositions unintelligible to us may yet be true, that also we may assent to them, provided they do not violate the laws of thought. But the point is that if they are unintelligible they are outside the range of credence. There may be such things as rollochites and they may sibble, but if anyone tells us

that rollochites are both what they are and something else, we know that the statement is false: it violates the second law.

If, on the other hand, Dr. Temple means, as presumably he does, that contradictory propositions may be true, or that propositions contradictory to us may not be contradictory to God, then he falls under the same condemnation as Dr. Harris. God is not mocked, nor does He mock us. Few people are capable of thinking more profoundly than Dr. Temple, who, if he were not a great apologist, would be a great philosopher. He is no more capable of equivocation than Dr. Harris. They are both men of unimpeachable candour, but they have been misled by their predilections.

We see, then, that Dr. Temple's argument is, at bottom, the same as that of Dr. Harris, and it is very important that we should appreciate its true meaning. It illustrates once again the truth of McTaggart's dictum: "None ever went about to break logic but logic broke him." It is based, however unconsciously, upon the desire to serve the apologetic interest, and it has no other basis. If, indeed, it were possible to believe it, we should be plunged into utter scepticism and despair. How out of harmony it is with our deepest convictions may easily be seen by reflecting upon its consequences. It seeks to invalidate the universality of the Principle of Contradiction. But the Principle of Contradiction is a corollary of the Principle of Identity: they stand or fall together. If, therefore, the spiritual world posited by religion is a world where these laws do not run, a world where "things are not what they are," then there is an end of Theism. For God is the God of Truth, and Truth is meaningless apart from the Laws of Thought. That our values are God's values is cardinal to our faith, the very Ark of the Covenant. If God's truth is not our truth it is not truth at all. "There cannot," said Bradley, "be two orders of truth in diametrical and everlasting opposition." The divine Mind we conceive to be infinitely comprehensive, embracing all possible categories, all "universes of discourse." But this conception is clearly irreconcilable with the view that it is essentially alogical. On that view, indeed, it ceases to be mind at all, and God ceases to be God.

Can Faith, or Authority, enable us to believe what Reason denies? This is another way of asking whether we can believe what we know to be untrue. Faith has been defined as "spiritual apprehension of divine truth apart from proof." Not, be it observed, apart from disproof. Such apprehension is sometimes called "religious experience" or "revelation." "Revealed truth," however, like any other, must conform to the canons of reason, which are also the criteria of truth. We may think that we hear the voice of God speaking to us, but if what that voice tells us is contrary to reason, it is not the voice of God. The final appeal is always and inevitably to reason, "that Judge, universal, yet individual to each, before whom all

other authority must bow." When the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews defined faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen," he meant that by faith (in its other sense of "passionate conviction") we can make our hopes come true; and so, no doubt, we can, if they are reasonable hopes. But there can be no compromise between faith and reason. The perfervid asseverations of ecstasy are not evidence. Tertullian's "credo quia impossibile"—"I do not care whether it is true or not, I believe it"—this sort of thing is not belief, but mania.

If, then, no Christians have ever, in the canonical sense, believed that Jesus was both God and Man, what have they believed about Him? It is certain that they have believed something with very great intensity.

There would seem to be a trinity of possible conceptions. We may think of Him as God; or as Man; or as neither God nor Man, but a combination of both.

Many Christians, perhaps, think of Him consistently as God. Others, we know, think of Him consistently as Man. Others, doubtless think of Him as a kind of Logos or Demigod, part God and part Man, an Intercessor or Mediator between God and Man. Canon Brasnett's conception, for example, clearly comes under this latter head. His view is that Jesus comprised two selves, a "noumenal" self, of which He was unaware, and a phenomenal or psychological self. The former was the Divine Logos, and the latter the human Jesus.

It is probable, however, that most of us do not envisage Him consistently at all. We vacillate between these various conceptions, thinking of Him now in one way and now in another. We can think of things only in terms of their attributes, since, apart from their attributes they are nothing. When we think of Him as eating and drinking, or displaying violent anger, we are thinking of Him as Man. When we think of Him as exercising supernatural powers, or as impeccable, we are thinking of Him as God. As God He would be incapable of sin; as Man He would be capable of sin; as both God and Man He would be both incapable and capable of sin; to such nonsensical conclusions does the original misconception lead us. There are, we may believe, attributes common to both God and Man—there is, we say, a "divine element" in Man. If so, such attributes are part of the insignia of Man, without which he would not be Man at all. We cannot say, in short, that Man possesses both divine and human attributes, for his "divine" attributes are as human as his animal attributes—the term human connotes them both. Man is wholly Man, not part God and part Man, though he may be "part God and part beast."

Which, then, of the three possible conceptions, is the true one? There can surely be no doubt about the answer.

If we try to think of our Lord as a mystical being who was at

once both Very God and Very Man we transform Him into a hieroglyph, a chimera, a phantom, that becomes more remote, unreal, and shadowy as we gaze upon it, and finally vanishes through the Ivory Gate into the land of false dreams from which it came.

But if we allow ourselves to contemplate Him as what indeed He was, a purely human being, He becomes at once intimate and real; a figure infinitely pathetic and winning. It is said that even when we have not deified Him we have made an idol of Him. He has become for us the Pattern Man, the Paragon of Humanity, "the Image of Good, to the beauty and perfection of which each succeeding generation has contributed its quota." But we could hardly have done this unless He had been, to begin with, a Being of unique spiritual loveliness. And such, in truth, He appears in the pages of Guignebert, most radical and ruthless of historians. He was not immaculate, not infallible, or He would not have been human. He pictured the relation of God to Man as that of a loving Father to His children. He believed that men grow to perfection by serving one another, and that they thus fulfil the will of their Father. His words were as balm to the souls of those who had ears to hear and hearts to understand, and the saying attributed to Him, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," is one that He could have uttered with perfect humility and truth. "His religion was His whole life, and God was the breath of His being." And although the Apocalyptic Vision that obsessed Him and His disciples has long since faded from the earth, His Law of Love remains. Purity, truth, chastity, tolerance, kindliness, humility, gentleness, pity, simplicity, forgiveness—these things He preached and these things He practised. Whatever deeper meaning the idea of the Incarnation may connote, it means, surely, at least this—as Rashdall expressed it—that "in human character at its highest we have a revelation, as nowhere else, of the inmost nature of the Divine." This is what St. Paul meant when he spoke of "the glory of God" reflected "in the face of Jesus Christ." And as He was beautiful with the beauty of holiness He became a Light to the world, "a pillar of fire by night, a pillar of cloud by day, guiding through the wilderness of life countless millions of our race." We may, indeed, call Him "Christ," for He was "anointed" with goodness; and we may call Him Lord.

It is hardly necessary to point the moral. Religion is man's search for God. The Archbishop of York, in his epistolary debate with Professor McBride, voiced, I think, the general sentiment of Christendom when he said: "What is wanted is co-operative study in which to help one another to build up the new synthesis for which the world is waiting, and in the meanwhile to present what many of us believe to be the essential Christian truth. . . ." The difficulty is that we differ so amongst ourselves as to what is the essential

Christian truth. With this utterance of the Archbishop's we will venture to collate two others: one of Bernard Shaw's—"The difference between Religion and Science is that Religion is always right and Science is always wrong; that is why I can accept the creed of Science and cannot accept the creed of Religion"; and one of Whitehead's—"Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as Science does." We must realize that the "new synthesis," when it comes, will not be final. Religion must eschew, once for all, the doctrine of dogmatic finality, the parent of obscurantism, bigotry, intolerance, and persecution.

On the other hand, while no religion is absolutely true, all religions are, as Herbert Spencer put it, "adumbrations of a truth"; all contain some germ or element of truth. On being asked by Professor McBride to indicate what he believed to be "the core of timeless truth" in Christianity, Dr. Temple replied that to do so *ex cathedra* would imply infallibility, but added: "as an expression of my own confident expectation I would point to the Nicene Creed . . . the crucial text is not 'God is love,' but 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.' "

No, No, Dr. Temple! The heart and soul of Christianity, its "core of timeless truth," is to be found, if anywhere, not in the mythology of the Messianic Logos which has so unhappily become crystallized in the creeds and formularies of the Church, but in the vision of God as the personification of goodness, and in that ideal of love and selfless service which, as we believe, the "Pale Galilean" incarnated in His life. It is said that it was the belief in His resurrection that created the Christian religion—though I think it was rather the belief in His parousia—but we must remember that it was because of what He had been in life to His disciples, because of the so great love for Him that burned in their hearts, that He "rose from the dead" and appeared again before them in His habit as He lived; they could not let Him go. It was His life, not His death, that was the epochal thing; the rest we may leave to God. The human story of that life, divested of the syncretic trappings of obsolete philosophies and the tinsel decorations of romantic legend, will never cease to quicken and inspire all

> . . . whose hearts are fresh and simple
> Who have faith in God and Nature
> Who believe that in all ages
> Every human heart is human,
> That in even savage bosoms
> There are longings, yearnings, strivings
> For the good they comprehend not,
> That the feeble hands and helpless,
> Groping blindly in the darkness,
> Touch God's right hand in that darkness
> And are lifted up and strengthened.

THE GREAT TAO

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AN understanding of the Chinese mind, and Chinese Art and Literature that are the expression of it, cannot be achieved without an examination of the fundamental elements that have gone to the building of Chinese mysticism.

The conception of "yang" and "yin" has become pretty familiar to the widening circle of those now taking an interest in Chinese affairs. It probably arose at a very early period of Chinese history. The antitheses of light and darkness, of male and female, of active and passive must obviously have influenced the primal thinkers who first sought for philosophical explanations of the Universe. Yet the Chinese mind did not, as some commentators have supposed, follow Persian dualism in attributing their apparently opposing manifestations to rival moral forces, or powers of Good and Evil.

Different forces there are, undoubtedly: the "yang"—male, positive, active, light-giving; the "yin"—female, passive, receptive, Queen of the Darkness. Doubtless more than one Chinese Socrates might have drawn from his own experience the unhappy generalization that connotes evil with the female principle, yet the Ancient Sages propounded a grander explanation. Contemplating the calm and even progression of night and day, of birth and death, of growth and decay, and all the certain and unerring processes of nature in the fruition of the crops, the habits of beast and bird and insect, the rotation of the seasons, they rejected, surely sensibly enough, any moral classification of those phenomena. Chinese thought, indeed, has always refused to see any intrinsic evil in Nature as a whole, or in the individual nature of man or beast. How could one say that darkness was evil, when from the very darkness of the womb came life itself? Yet evil there certainly was, though it was not an easy thing to define, for what was evil for one might be good for another. Seeming disaster was often the prelude to success. The cry of the mother meant the birth of the child. The Sages therefore defied the apparent moral antitheses. Instead of Good and Evil as opposing principles, they proclaimed Harmony and Discord. Good and evil were not intrinsically in "yang" and "yin" themselves, but only potentially in their interactions. So long as there was Harmony between the two, the sequences would be Good—good, that is, in a broad sense. The heavenly bodies would continue on their due courses, regulating the orderly process of the seasons; the rains would fall, the mists rise, the

earth bring forth its appointed fruits. There would be neither floods nor earthquakes nor devastating storms. Every living thing would fit itself into its appropriate place, functioning smoothly in harmony with the divine purposes of gods and spirits and ancestors.

The directing force in the scheme is the Great Tao. It is something quite impersonal. Prayer, for example, to the Great Tao would be as incongruous as prayer to the Law of Gravity. It was before God or gods who are Beings created by the Tao. For the Tao is the primal source whence all came, gods and spirits and men, beasts, and all the phenomena of the Universe in the dual order of "yang" and "yin." "This is the Tao," says Kwang-tsu. ". . . It has its root and ground of existence in itself. Before there were heaven and earth from of old, there it was securely existing. From it came the mysterious existences of spirits, from it the mysterious existence of God (the Lord of Heaven). It produced heaven, it produced earth. It was before the primal ether. It was above all, and could not be considered high, it was below all and could not be considered deep. It was produced before heaven and earth, and yet could not be considered to have lasted long, it was older than the highest antiquity, and yet could not be considered old." It is the nature of the Tao to be harmonious, and in the divine scheme of things it is therefore intended that there shall be concord of "yang" and "yin." And sometimes, somewhere, the Poet and Dreamer could believe that he had achieved contact with an ideal Unseen World, where that mystic harmony really did exist, where the Tao really functioned without those ugly aberrations and discords that manifested themselves on earth as wars, floods, famines, earthquakes . . . marring its processes there. These were the evil things; their source, that lack of harmony, not Nature itself, not the nature of man or beast, not "yang" nor "yin." The lack of harmony arose from the perversions of Nature, that in Man's case made him proud, ambitious, avaricious, assertive, aggressive. . . . Let him, at least, abandon his resultant follies, and seek the simple, natural life, doing the task to hand, without any ulterior purpose than that of maintaining the pervading Harmony of the Great Tao.

The real world refused, and, one supposes, has always refused, to respond to the Taoist aspirations for Harmony. In China, as elsewhere, there arose a practical ethical school, whose chief exponent, of course, was Confucius. It sought Harmony, too, and accepted the general conception of "yang" and "yin," but it eschewed pure mysticism, and the Unseen World. It sought, like other ethical schools, and with much the same conclusions, to analyse man's actions into right and wrong, good and bad, to encourage the first and restrain the second by rule, precept, and admonition, and the discipline of propriety and ceremonial. Yet the Confucian, it should be noted, equally with the Taoist, refused to admit any intrinsic

evil in the Universe. Evil was due to a falling away from the path of virtue as defined by the Confucian ethic.

On a first consideration there would appear to be little reason for conflict between these two schools. If there was any truth at all in the Taoist conception of that potential harmony of Nature, within itself, and with that mystic Unseen World, one might suppose that the Confucian ethical teachers would have been welcomed as allies for its achieval.

Yet in fact the two schools have always been in strong opposition, refuting in their activities the very harmony both claim to seek.

It is a common opposition, found wherever Mankind has begun to ponder on its destiny. It draws everywhere from common roots that lie deep in the fundamental problems of existence. Ideal or real; body or soul; works or faith; this world or the next; the letter that killeth or the spirit that giveth life . . . the sound of conflict about these things echoes down the ages, and there is no final solution of them —not yet, anyhow, and when there is there will be nothing left to dispute about!

The dispute in China, however, took a peculiar turn, with consequences correspondingly remarkable, that account for to this day those differences of outlook that sometimes make the Chinese difficult for the Westerner to understand.

The Taoists could put up a good case. In criticism of the efforts of the Confucians to define right and wrong, and regulate it by rule and precept, they could retort in the first place with that old argument, known to the Greek Sophists, and Socrates, and Pontius Pilate, on the impossibility of really defining the Good and the True. It was certainly a fact, consecrated by the experience of all the ages, that an action defined as "good" often brought trouble and misfortune. Clearly then, weighed in the light of basic Taoist principles, such an act, however "good" unseeing men might call it, could not be in harmony with the purposes of the Tao, could not therefore really be "good" if there were any transcendental meaning in that quality. On the other hand, strangely enough, that same, or a similar act, always "good" according to Confucian ethic, but performed under different circumstances, might equally, and often in fact did, bring its reward of well-being and honour as men counted such things, might even spread its effluence all around, and so properly, if unwittingly, further the supernal purposes. And yet again an act defined as evil might impartially bring either fortune or misfortune to its perpetrator. Even the most sincere and conscientious follower of the rule was continually in dilemma in his efforts to apply it to some particular ethical problem. As often as not the antithesis was not a simple obvious one of "good" and "bad," but the choice lay between two goods, or two bads, and the rule gave no guidance, or if it did,

was at least as likely as not to propose the wrong solution. Often too the urge to the noblest act, the act we should call "quixotic," was condemned by cold consideration of the ethic. Often again a mysterious inner prompting—what some might call instinct, others influences emanating from Unseen Powers—provided a truer guidance to appropriate action than all the calculated wisdom of the Teachers; whilst the generous action done without thought of reward, often received it when the "bread" came back "after many days" across the waste of waters. Such conclusions, based on irrefutable observation, seemed clearly to expose the vanity of definition. To the sceptical judgment those varying and unaccountable consequences must come to be attributed to mere chance, and the consideration of them would inevitably breed a pessimistic despair, ending in the rejection of all ethical principle, and a fatalistic yielding to the crude promptings of circumstance. On the other hand, the Taoist, condemning ethical calculations, could marshal the mystic arguments, familiar in all ethical disputations, against utilitarian virtue based on the clear promise of a reward. The true Sage will have "no thought of self, merit, or fame . . . he will know how to bestow favours without seeking a return . . ." We discern the paradox propounded by every spiritualized religion.

But as with all paradoxes, whilst criticism of them is comparatively easy, a constructive solution is hard to find. The Taoists produced one that followed logically—too logically perhaps—from the basic conceptions of their philosophy. Its conclusions were to be pregnant, but by no means happy in their spiritual influences.

Since "good" and "evil" seemed undefinable, inextricably involved both in action and idea, productive of consequences having no ethical relations with cause or motive, consideration of those antitheses should be ignored. This fundamental conclusion accorded with those primal conceptions of the ethically "indifferent" nature of "yang" and "yin." The more extreme schools indeed bluntly denied any ethical distinction at all between good and evil. Action anyhow was not to be directed by consideration for either. There was only one idea for the Sage to keep fixedly before his mind, and that was Harmony; only one path for him to walk, and that was the Way of Harmony, harmony between Seen and Unseen, gods and men, in a quiet, disinterested, unpurposeful adaptation of oneself and one's doings to the unceasing processes of the universe. "The Sage is free from self-display, therefore he shines; from self-assertion, therefore he is distinguished; from self-boasting, therefore his merit is acknowledged; from self-complacency, therefore he acquires superiority." It is useless for a man to have a purpose, since the purposes of the supernal processes are clearly beyond his grasp. For: "It is the Way of the Tao to act without thinking of acting; to conduct affairs

without feeling the trouble of them; to taste without discerning any flavour; to consider the small as great; the few as many . . ." One perceives the philosopher struggling to adapt inadequate human thoughts and experiences to the inchoate and inexpressible concepts of a Reality behind the Veil.

The mystic of all ages and climes must feel some instinctive sympathy for this negative, anarchistic attitude. It offers a longed-for freedom from man-made laws; eschews, or anyhow seeks to avoid, the dilemma propounded when virtue is promised a reward, and proposes instead the prospect—congenial to the mystic mind—of a reaching out towards the secret heart of things, and the achievement of a mystical harmonious union with its purposes. Perhaps the doctrine could have found some true and fruitful content with a God who was both First Principle and Person, One, a Father, and Love.

The Taoist never reached that basic conception, and all the aberrations of his creed, the ultimate unfruitfulness of his noble transcendental gropings, must be traced to that cause. The Great Tao was itself, of course, an impersonal Principle, but the conviction of an Unseen World and Unseen Powers, building on and gathering up the primitive animistic beliefs common to all peoples, approved the existence of gods and spirits—not One, but many, nor Love, though some might exhibit reflections of that ethereal quality. But generally, the gods, in accordance with basic Taoist principles, were neither good nor evil. A cynic might say they were both, like Man himself! More properly, they were "indifferent." Anyhow, it was not for man, unable to distinguish good or evil for himself, to presume to judge the ethical qualities of the gods. They might often be disagreeable, but they were a part of the scheme of things—a much more important part than Man, whose chief concern must be to win their favour if possible, or at least avoid giving offence to them. Properly approached and duly propitiated they might fulfil a useful function for helpless Man blindly groping through the mazy processes of the Great Tao. In a word, since there was no true ethical content in the Universe, since good and evil were but names whereby Man attempted to explain the unaccountable circumstances in which he found himself, the Sage would seek only to follow the Way of the Gods, to keep his thoughts and actions in tune with theirs, in the constant faith that they, being of a superior and more spiritual nature, would have a surer insight into the transcendent processes of the Great Tao. Thus we touch again the chords of every mystic's being.

No true mystic can be merely pragmatical, but it is in the nature of things that every creed must be judged by ultimate results. The Taoist, seeking harmonious concord with the unaccountable com-

plications of existence, was necessarily pragmatical. There was ultimately no other test than that of achieving Harmony, and the proof that he had done so was obviously the avoidance of trouble, of discord in his relations with men and things, and the attainment of a quiet prosperity whereof the visible signs were respect, consideration, and a long life on earth. Inevitably, as in so many other creeds, the mystic aspiration for action without thought of reward proved empty. Taoism developed a cult based intrinsically on the principle of conciliation and propitiation of the vast hierarchy of gods and spirits that functioned under the mysterious direction of the Great Tao. And as is the way of cults, practice degenerated from the nobler implications of philosophy.

Temples and shrines became mere loci for the practice of propitiatory rites whereby the favour of the god could be won, and the required information received for the securing of harmonious consequences for all the actions, great or small, that go to make the sum of daily existence. It might be a mere matter of catching fish, graver ones such as warding off blight from the crops and fruit-trees, disease in beast or man, a journey, marriage, perhaps some portentous political decision. Good and evil . . . these were neither in things nor actions, but only in consequences that failed to achieve the essential concord. Needless to say, that there was infinite scope for the development of every superstition, for the employment of charms and magic, elixirs, astrology, and divination in all their wide and varied range. The experience of our time can assure us that the magic was not always vain, and that the Taoist belief in the intrinsic unity of things must often have received miraculous confirmation from their probings into the secrets of the inner nature of man and matter, and of their mystic relations to the courses of the heavenly bodies and the chance combinations of external circumstances.

One must not, therefore, be too severe on those responsible for these uneasy developments. The gods indeed already existed in the popular mind before the philosophers strove to account for them. The Taoists, by establishing the co-ordinating principle of the Great Tao, did do something to modify the crudities of primal superstitions, to give a higher, a more poetical, if not a more spiritual sanction to them. But certainly the cult, for educated and uneducated alike, came to be little more than a purposeful seeking of the assistance of a god, to win favour or to avoid misfortune. Success in this operation would bring reward, in this world and the next, and the reward became the end—on earth, in the form of long life; for those truly successful a place in the Abode of the Immortals.

It was not long then before those puzzling words "good" and "bad" crept back into Taoist vocabulary. They were a necessity of ordinary speech when considering the honours due to the successful

achievement of Harmony. A "good" deed was one that was pleasing to the gods, and if contradictions arose, owing to the same deed bringing sometimes fortune and sometimes misfortune, then a new definition concluded that there were good and evil gods, thus announcing a fresh breakdown of the "indifferent" principles of the earlier philosophy. Moreover, practical considerations, the continuing conflict with ethical Confucianism, necessitated some scheme for checking the undoubted misdeeds of erratic men. So definition came in again, and Taoism outdid Confucianism with its long schedules of "things not done." But the schedules strangely preserved in their incongruities those earlier "indifferent" conceptions. It is not easy to perceive any consistent ethical content in such warnings as follows:

". . . if he strides over the hearth; kills newly-born children; if he sings and dances on the last day of the moon . . . spits when fronting the north, sighs when fronting the fireplace, points at a rainbow, or kills a tortoise without reason . . ." he shall suffer a shortening of life. The periods vary from one hundred days to twelve years.

Obviously the compilers of the code are still chiefly concerned for the feelings of the gods over these matters. Even if some of the scheduled offences are truly bad according to our ethic, they, like the other trivial or "indifferent" ones, are only so because they are offensive to the heavenly beings. They are punishable again, not from any principle of justice, but because acts offensive to the gods upset the Harmony of the Tao, and bring misfortune on all. The lack of any real ethical relation between punishment and crime emphasizes the point. The penalties are reckoned in days or years deducted from life on earth, and the scale is based on the amount of offence given to the gods, not to the moral prejudices of men. Doubtless the philosopher could declare that in some ultimate Utopian consummation, when the last discord had been silenced, and the perfect harmony of all things within the Tao achieved, such differences of outlook would merge in a wider vision. It may well be so, but such a time still seems as far off as it was 2,500 years ago.

The Confucians, meanwhile, were steadily developing their moral and political theories, and the Confucian scheme was compendious enough in both respects. It laid down a complete ethic that displays no essential difference from other ethical schools. It propounded a political theory based on the analogy between the State and the Family, that echoes continually in our own Empire broadcasts of to-day. Yet Confucian ethic and Confucian political theory have always lacked the dynamic necessary to give them reality. The letter was there, but the spirit that giveth life was lacking. The cold pages of history supply the confirmatory commentary, whilst the very

survival of Taoism, and the acceptance of the alien doctrine of Buddhism are impressive evidences of the inadequacy of any positivist utilitarian creed to satisfy the expansive aspirations of the human spirit.

Taoism (like Buddhism later) therefore held its own because, with all its pandering to gross superstitions, it could provide scope for mystical yearnings, because it gave assurance of some other kind of existence beyond this world of sin and sorrow. Paradoxical as it must seem, it was perhaps better for men to be more concerned with pleasing or humouring gods and spirits (even Chinese gods and spirits) than for their own mere material prosperity. And the best Taoist does seem to have conformed to some of the highest conceptions of the perfect gentleman, with perhaps an over-emphasis on the gentleness.

"The Sage will feel kindly towards all creatures. . . . He will make himself correct, and so transform others. . . . He ought not to vaunt his superiorities. . . . He will be gentle, frugal, and humble. . . ." For, says Lao-tsu, "With that gentleness I can be bold; with that frugality I can be liberal; shrinking from taking precedence, I can become a vessel of the highest honour."

Since Art is the expression of the spirit, we perceive that Chinese plastic art, architecture, poetry, and literature owe their highest inspirations to Taoism. The familiar dragon, clearly outlined, or lurking in some mysterious background, symbolizes the active "yang" principle. The Sage, brooding on the lonely mountain, whilst the cranes fly across the red glow in the evening sky, is pondering on the elusive secret of the Great Tao's harmony. The poet, seeking a theme to express his unaccountable transcendental yearnings, strives to create a picture of the mystical union of the Seen and the Unseen.

> The changing shapes of wind-swept clouds,
> The energies of flowers and plants,
> The crags and cliffs of mountains,
> All these are like mighty Tao.
>
> SSU-KUNG TU (A.D. 834–908). *History of Chinese Literature*, H. A. Giles.

For all, gentle and simple, scholar and boor, the conception of the Great Tao brings with it an uplifting sense of a process higher than that concerned with the common destinies of ephemeral man. It declares

> The unseen Power that moves, and guides, and stills
> All animated nature's varied life
> And law reveals where all seemed useless strife . . .
>
> LU-TEH (nineteenth century). *Chinese Poems*, translated by Chas. Budd.

Again, just as in Europe the anarchy of Gothic and Baroque styles defied the cold severity of classical forms, so, in China, the grotesque extravagances of temple and shrine continued to assert the Great Tao's freedom from line and logic. The Buddhist "pagoda" as it developed in China owes much to Taoism. There is Taoist as well as Christian and Buddhist inspiration behind the greatest of Buddhist artistic conceptions—the female Kwan Yin or Goddess of Mercy. The "Arhats" have close affinities with the Taoist Sages, and most of the gods of Chinese Buddhist art and cult have a Taoist origin, whilst the Chinese Buddhist monastery and temple preserve the Taoist style.

On the other hand, Taoism certainly took from Buddhism its forms of cult and ritual; and also the dubious conception of a Hell, where the wicked, inadequately punished on earth, whether by man or in accordance with the peculiar retributions of the Taoist schedule, could receive the fuller meed due to them. As with Buddhism, the women were, of course, in a majority there. The business apparently grew so much as to require a special judge, who was duly set up in the person of an Immortal Sage of the priestly family of Chang. He passed his earthly existence in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D., achieving the ripe age of 126 years.

It was inevitable that the Taoists should take the opposite side to the Confucians in the political conflict that outran many centuries. It was the one, familiar to all histories, between democracy and autocracy. China eventually achieved a workable compromise, but the seeds of discord were always there, and have, of course, come to fruit again in these days.

Confucian political theory, however it modified itself in practice, was fundamentally democratic. The root of all was the individual, and the personal character of that individual. The State was made for him, not he for the State. It was the misfortune and chief defect of Confucianism that, whilst positing this great truth, it failed to provide a sufficient foundation for the character necessary to give practical content to it.

For the Taoist, on the other hand, immersed in his conception of the Great Tao, it was natural to confer reality on political organisms that carried in them a suggestion of harmonious unity. The Taoist was thus an early Hegelian, or rather, to be true to chronology, Hegel, who in fact drew much inspiration from Chinese sources, was a Taoist! For these the State was the most important thing, as conforming most nearly to the processes of the Great Tao. It was claimed to have its parallel in the Unseen World, where a Supreme Ruler, set up by the Tao, autocratically guided the actions of lesser gods and spirits. By analogy the ruler on earth must be autocratic too. He, and he alone could bear the responsibility for maintaining

the harmony of the State organism within itself and in relation to the spirit-world. He, and he alone could intercede with the Ruler on High for the general well-being. A subject, as individual, was of as little importance as he is declared to be in the Neo-Hegelian State concepts of our Western world of to-day. The Taoists, then, stood for autocracy and Divine Right of the Ruler, and the prevailing anarchy of tribal times provided a strong justification for that plea.

In the eventual compromise the Chinese Emperor drew attributes from both schools. As Supreme Ruler on Earth, reflecting the authority of the Ruler on High, he received divine honours. He was the Son of Heaven and he alone could commune with its Lord for the welfare of the great State family. He was the source of all earthly authority.

Yet Confucianism, in opposition to extreme Taoist political theory, imposed on this autocracy salutary checks that endured to the last days.

The Emperor's autocratic powers depended on a Mandate from Heaven. Failure to justify that Mandate gave the people, asserting their individual human rights, an intrinsic right of remonstrance, in the last resort, of rebellion. The frequent changes in Chinese Dynasties, even the imposed acceptance of foreign ones, derived from that fundamental if dangerous principle. Nor did the Taoists always stand aloof from revolutionary movements. It would be perfectly congenial to their theories to assume that the disorders in the State were due, anyhow in part, to the failure of the Rulers to maintain the Celestial concord. The morality or immorality of their actions, indeed, were not in question. They had displeased the gods, and the proofs were floods, famine, disease, brigandage, barbarian invasions. . . . Heaven's favour being withdrawn, it was right to seek a new ruler and the wisdom of a Sage; his insight into the processes of the Great Tao; in effect, his skill in charms, magic, the reading of signs, might well be employed for the purpose. Yet, significantly enough, on the occasions of *foreign conquest*, it was the Taoists who stood by the forlorn resistance of the Nationalists, when the Confucian bureaucrats in their worldly wisdom had made their peace with the conquerors. The Taoists, too, seemed to have inspired the subsequent renascent nationalism.

Broadly speaking, however, the Taoist would be classed as a greater reactionary and conservative than his Confucian opponent. Both were, indeed, tied to tradition and the ways of the ancestors, but whilst the Confucian, anyhow in theory, stressed the importance of the individual, approved education, and gave opportunity for it to the poorest through its admirable system of scholarships, Taoist political theory professed yearnings for a mythical Golden Age, where Harmony had been secured by keeping the people in a safe ignorance,

employed from generation to generation on hereditary tasks and free from all ambitions for change and progress.

Then "the people had their regular and constant nature . . . they did not form themselves into separate classes . . . they were left to their natural tendencies. . . . Men walked with slow and grave steps and with looks directed steadily forwards. On the hills were no foot-paths . . . on the lakes no boats nor dams. . . . Birds and beasts . . . all lived as one family . . . How could men know amongst themselves the distinctions of superior and small? Equally without knowledge they did not leave the path of their natural virtue; equally free from desires they were in a state of pure simplicity; their nature was what it ought to be."

This is of course polemic, designed to confute the Confucian adversary, but behind the paradoxes we may still perceive the earnest gropings after the intangible Secret of the Great Tao.

The contribution of Taoist philosophy to the development of the Chinese mind and character thus becomes clear. The Chinese is essentially pragmatical, he judges by results. He is the reverse of quixotic, choosing the way of least resistance, as being, naturally, less likely to upset the harmony of things. He has an aptitude for management, accommodation, and compromise—good things in their place and degree—rather than for firm decision calculated to break down or burst through the obstacles to action. In a word, he makes an admirable politician, in the less estimable interpretation of that term! He is certainly superstitious to a degree far exceeding that of any other civilized people, though we may note that similar tendencies are not absent amongst the more backward peoples of Europe to-day. He is both sceptic and fatalist, for since his Taoism denies the possibility of any sure ethical guide to action, he must perforce surrender himself quietistically to circumstances, seeking only, with the favour of the gods, so to adapt himself to them as to escape the greatest possible amount of trouble. Yet with these negative qualities there is also scope in Taoism for "the larger heart the kindlier hand," to reprove, as ever, the sterner, harder attitude of the strict follower of ethical rule. The Way of the Sage is after all a Way of Harmony, of concord between gods and men and the forces of Nature. The discipline of ceremonial, the rigidity of law, the stern adherence to the dictates of tradition and duty—all these things are doubtless necessary for the making of a man; yet, such is the strange paradox of his nature, he must also temper them with humbleness, meekness, and occasional relaxations of the strict letter of the law, otherwise the disciplines provoke the qualities of harshness, tyranny, and cruelty.

In the conclusion of the whole matter we may recognize that neither Confucianism nor Taoism have proved adequate for Man's

needs. It does not suffice—even if it can be done, as the Confucian proposes—to distinguish between good and bad by rule and line, or to refuse to contemplate a world beyond the senses. The Taoist had his justification in holding that there was such a world, and that Man's reason cannot be the final judge, as Emanuel Kant announced some 150 years ago. The Taoists were his forerunners, too, as they were the pregnant Hegel's.

For us in the West the conclusion should not be hard to find. We have long claimed to have a light, but are rather given in these days to hide it coyly under a bushel. Yet there is no other solution that in any way meets the case than the conception of a single God, the Father, whose ways are indeed often inscrutable, but whose attributes are ultimately embraced in the all-concluding one of Love; who values each living soul for its own sake, and so assures us of our individuality, declaring it more important than any man-made thing or concept, ethical or political. Nor, if we are Christians, need we be ashamed to conceive of that Love as manifesting itself in the person of a Divine Son and the abiding presence of a Holy Spirit, who does, in sundry times and places, and moments of peril, difficulty, and hard choice, give us the grace to guide us along the Way of the true Harmony, a Way that is not the mere process of an impersonal Tao, directing a hierarchy in which gods and men and beasts, plants and matter, differ only in degree, but the Way of the One Living God.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In the article which appeared in PHILOSOPHY of October 1936 on "Scholasticism" passages occur, without marks of quotation, transcribed from an article by Fr. John J. Toohey, S.J., in *The Irish Theological Quarterly* of July 1919. The writer of the article on "Scholasticism," on being communicated with, has written as follows in explanation:

"Originally the article was much shorter . . . and from time to time I added extracts which I had copied out from various sources without always knowing the authors. Unfortunately I lost the commonplace book . . . and therefore I could not verify any notes I had made; that was the reason I inserted the note at the end of the article—I am sorry that I could not be more precise. I am writing immediately to Fr. Toohey, S.J., to ask his forgiveness, and I give you full leave to make any apology you think necessary in the Journal.

"Yours very truly,
"FELIX HOPE.

"*November* 12, 1936."

The Surveys on "Philosophy in France" and "Philosophy in Germany" not having reached the Editor in time for the current issue, it is hoped to arrange for them to appear in the April or July numbers.

NEW BOOKS

Kant's Metaphysic of Experience. By H. J. Paton, D.Litt. (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1936. Pp. Vol. I, 585; Vol. II, 510. Price 2 vols., 30s.)

It is a tribute to Kant's greatness as a philosopher that books about him, even when they are as good as Professor Paton's commentary, leave the reader with a slight feeling of disappointment. The range of the *Critical Philosophy* is so wide that any serious work about it is bound to raise questions which demand to be answered, but which no author could reasonably be expected to deal with even in two substantial volumes. Professor Paton has naturally faced this difficulty, and has firmly, perhaps too firmly, restricted himself to the task, which indeed is no easy one, of elucidating the *Critique of Pure Reason* as far as the end of the Transcendental Analytic. The method which he adopts is that of an exposition and commentary on the work, section by section, in the order in which it was originally published, and this method, though justified by the absence of any satisfactory commentary in English, has certain inevitable drawbacks. The professional student of Kant may complain that he is not offered any general appreciation of the critical position as a whole, but is told too often that, whether he likes it or not, so-and-so was Kant's view on a particular point, and that it is at least not a silly view. As to whether in the last resort the *Critical Philosophy* is the truth or not, Professor Paton strenuously refuses to commit himself, though the reader will probably have little doubt that he believes it to be sound in principle. But, however much we may regret this abstinence in respect of ultimate problems, we must recognize that the discussion of them would have carried the author beyond the limits which he set himself. In his own words, "a book of the type I have now written, if I could have read it when first I began the study of Kant, would have saved me from endless misunderstanding and much unnecessary labour; and I hope that I may have done something to make further progress more easy for my successors" (I, 18), and he is therefore writing not primarily for experts who already understand exactly what Kant meant in the *Critique*, but rather for the vast majority who are still trying to find out, and whose labour, though heavy enough, will be considerably lightened by the existence of this book.

A more serious criticism of the running commentary as a method of expounding the *Critique* is that it involves an unnecessary amount of repetition. The fault here lies with Kant, not with the commentator, for it is inseparable from the synthetic method which he himself deliberately chose to employ that it should involve constant references to what has gone before and anticipations of what is still to come. There is, therefore, a real danger that the reader of a commentary, as of the *Critique* itself, may from time to time feel that he is lost in a forest of problems with all too little guidance as to which of them are really of vital importance. No difficulty seems ever really to be dealt with at the place where it occurs in the text, but we are referred either back or forwards for further discussion of it. To overcome this defect entirely would be to achieve the impossible, but Professor Paton certainly gives the reader all possible assistance, especially by informing him from time to time that chapters and sections which are mainly repetitive may be omitted without detriment to his understanding of the complete doctrine.

In view of the author's explicit statement of his purpose, the commentary must be judged solely by its success in explaining what Kant's view actually was, not what it ought to have been or might possibly have been if he had studied the works of his Hegelian successors. By this standard it is almost completely successful, and provides a thorough and comprehensive refutation of a view prevalent, especially in this country, "that Kant was grossly incompetent; that he had a wholly imperfect grasp of what he was trying to say: and that the *Critical Philosophy*, which in the *Critique* is partly embedded in a mass of non-Critical doctrine and partly not even expressed at all, is known in its full stature only to a few choice spirits of whom Kant certainly was not one" (II, 371). In contrast to this fantastic doctrine, Professor Paton persistently and rightly maintains that the *Critique* expresses a coherent and intelligible view with which we may disagree but which we ought at least to take the trouble to understand. "The modern tendency," he says, "to treat Kant with condescension seems to me based on no rational grounds; and, paradoxical though it may appear to the present age, I will venture to express the opinion—an opinion which grows ever firmer the more I study the *Kritik*—that Immanuel Kant had a far better understanding of the *Critical Philosophy* than any commentator who ever lived" (*ibid.*).

It is, of course, impossible to give any summary account of a work of this kind, and I shall do no more than indicate briefly the points in Professor Paton's exposition which I find especially helpful and interesting: I will then discuss at somewhat greater length the major issues on which I cannot accept his account of Kant's doctrine as wholly satisfactory.

As regards Transcendental Aesthetic, he is clearly right in maintaining that critics who have made much of the antithesis between space as logically and as psychologically *a priori* have done less than justice to Kant's view. The Aesthetic is a provisional (though not for that reason a pre-Critical) account of the nature of space and time which ought not to be regarded as complete in itself, and when it is taken in its relation to the Analytic, the supposed inconsistency is found to disappear. Kant's considered doctrine is that "space and time are not only necessary as universal conditions of experience. They have in themselves, even when abstracted from experience, a certain necessity and universality: for in knowing them, we know, apart from experience, what all their parts must be. Our intuition of them is pure inasmuch as it is intuition of a whole whose parts can be known independently of experience" (I, 105). Thus "the two senses of *priori* are bound up. Space and time are known *a priori* firstly as wholes which necessarily determine the character of their parts, and secondly as necessary conditions of experience. If they were not *a priori* ideas in the first sense, they would not be *a priori* ideas in the second sense" (I, 154).

Of far greater interest and importance, however, is the distinction between General and Transcendental Logic which Professor Paton discusses at some length, and here, too, his view seems to me at least to be entirely correct. I have never been able to understand the doctrine that Kant invented a new mental process known as "synthetic thinking" subject to laws different from those of ordinary logical thought, which, I suppose, is what is meant by the assertion that formal logic gives us the forms of analytic judgments only, and not the forms of synthetic judgment. Professor Paton is unquestionably correct when he says (I, 213) that there is no evidence whatever that Kant ever held such a belief. It is its concern with the *origin* of our cognitions which gives to Transcendental Logic its peculiar character (I, 228), and while it is correct to say that Formal Logic by ignoring the matter of concepts fails to see that they may be of different kinds or that the analysis

on which they rest presupposes synthesis, it certainly does not follow that Formal Logic is for that reason either untrue or inadequate in its own sphere (I, 202). The fact is rather that synthetic judgments add to our knowledge *materialiter* and not merely *formaliter*, and for this reason formal logic gives no account of them so far as they are synthetic: but this does not imply that their form is not the form of all judgment or that logic gives no account of such a common form (I, 215). In dealing with the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories in A, Professor Paton is mainly concerned to refute once and for all the patchwork theory evolved by Adickes and Vaihinger and further elaborated by Professor Norman Kemp Smith. He claims to show that the Deduction, while admittedly repetitive and prolix, really does state a single coherent point of view. Kant, for better or worse, saw fit to divide it into a subjective and an objective deduction, and to subdivide each of these into a provisional and an authoritative exposition. Hence it is not really very surprising that we can discover in it traces of a number of different arguments, and that some of these omit factors (e.g. the threefold transcendental synthesis) which are essential to the understanding of the whole. It is, as Professor Paton maintains, singularly perverse to ignore the avowed structure of this section of the *Critique* and then to claim that it must be a patchwork composed at different dates and from different points of view *because* some parts of it omit arguments which properly belong (and, in fact, are found) elsewhere. Two further points deserve especial notice. In the first place Professor Paton is, I believe, fully justified in the insistence with which he stresses Kant's conviction that both the Deduction and the Principles are primarily concerned with the actual objects of physical science; the latter in particular are intelligible only in the light of the views expounded in the *Monadologia Physica* and the *Metaphysische Anfangsgrund der Naturwissenschaft*; and, secondly, he is surely correct in emphasizing, though it should not be necessary to do so, that Kant neither abandoned nor qualified his belief in the existence of independent things in themselves in B.

There remain, however, two fundamental problems of Kantian interpretation as to which every serious commentator must be required to state and maintain a considered view. They are (1) what precisely did Kant understand by the phenomenon or empirical object? And (2) what was Kant's doctrine of inner sense and its relation to time? Professor Paton has much to say that is true and important on both these points, but on neither of them do I feel confident that he has completely solved the problems which the *Critique* presents or even (since he does not claim to have spoken the last word) that his account is as complete as might be expected from his handling of other topics.

In respect of the first, he is firmly of the opinion that the phenomenon is no *Zwischending* which intervenes between our mind and the thing in itself (II, 306). What distinguishes an object from a succession of subjective appearances is, he holds, just the necessary combination of those appearances imposed by the nature of our thought and by the transcendental synthesis of imagination working through the medium of time (II, 167). The object is, therefore, not to be regarded as one idea among others, but rather it *is* the combination of ideas in a necessary synthetic unity (II, 379), and therefore the distinction between an object and a mere subjective appearance lies in the fact that the latter is simply a partial or temporary aspect of the former (II, 440).

Now this doctrine, whether or not it is satisfactory as a view, is evidently in harmony with much of what Kant is maintaining, especially in the Deduction of the Categories (cf. in particular A 104–5). It is only when we attempt

to interpret the Analogies that it loses its initial plausibility as a complete account of the critical position. It is essentially a development of Kant's fundamental notion that the mind has *a priori* knowledge only of what it has itself contributed to its object by an activity of *a priori* synthesis or construction, and we may reasonably suppose that he himself reached this position by reflection on the function of the figure constructed according to a rule in Euclidean geometry. If this is the case, it is hardly surprising that the complete formulation of it in the Deduction is more satisfactory when the "object" under consideration is a triangle than when it is something to which the term "object" is more safely applied, i.e. a physical body. It is, of course, possible to interpret the Analogies on the assumption that the objects with which science attempts to deal really *are* our constructions in precisely the same sense that geometrical figures are; but Professor Paton does not hold this view. On the contrary, he rightly maintains that Kant believed in the existence of physical substances which exercise real causal efficacy and not merely in causality as a necessary sequence of ideas (II, 281, 282). He is thus faced, as was Kant himself, with the ultimate problem, namely, how can phenomena be at once products of our synthetic imagination and also in any intelligible sense causally operative physical substances. He does indeed admit that he is not prepared fully to discuss this problem here, and mentions that it involves the doctrine of double affection expounded in the *Opus Postumum* (II, 279). But surely it *must* be discussed unless we are prepared to admit that the whole critical theory rests on an assumption which we cannot reasonably be asked to grant. In his own words, "I do not find it difficult to suppose that our minds are such that to them reality must appear as physical bodies in space which must conform to the laws of geometry; but for some reason I do find it difficult to suppose—and I imagine that many share this difficulty—that our minds are such that to them reality must appear, not only as a succession of changes in time, but as a succession of changes in time which must conform to causal law" (*ibid.*). In other words, "the difficulty is to understand how it (the mind) can impose a causal order on my *actual* sense-perceptions" (II, 280).

When it is formulated in these explicit terms the problem is indeed a hopeless one, but I cannot help thinking that Professor Paton has involved Kant in it unnecessarily by his uncompromising rejection of all "phenomenalist" heresies in the interpretation of the *Critique*. I do not myself find his ground for such rejection very convincing; indeed, it seems to me to be primarily his belief that anything asserted by Vaihinger must necessarily be false. Apart from this, we have no evidence but the assertion that Kant was not a "representative idealist." But this amounts only to saying that he did not, as Descartes and Berkeley had done, maintain that the existence of our minds is immediately known to us, whereas that of physical bodies rests on an inference. What he maintained against this view, however, was, as Professor Paton himself explicitly recognizes, that our ideas *both* of objects *and* of the self were representative in character, i.e. were not intellectual intuitions. In view of this I can see no reason why Kant should not maintain (and I think he *does* maintain) the existence (*a*) of a world of things in themselves of whose character and relations, since they are *ex hypothesi* not spatio-temporal, we can *know* nothing. We can, however, *believe* that it consists of a plurality of self-subsistent entities related by a system of final, not mechanical causes. This seems to me to be clearly the view of the Appendix to the Dialectic and of the second and third *Critiques*. (*b*) Of a world of Newtonian bodies causally interacting in space and time. These are not actually perceived but are representations by imagination of world (*a*).

Their *real* causal interaction is thus simply a representation of the real (but unknowable) nexus which exists in that world. This implies, of course, that the physical universe is not a "construct" of productive imagination in the literal sense in which triangles are the constructs of geometers, but such a doctrine is perfectly consistent with the Kantian thesis that imagination is both sensuous and intellectual, i.e. receptive and spontaneous in character. (*c*) Of an indeterminate aggregate of sensa which are representations immediately of (*b*) and therefore mediately of (*a*). If this were the case, it would be strictly inaccurate to use the word "causality" of anything except necessary connections within (*b*). It might, however, be applied by analogy to relations of representation between (*a*) and (*b*), (*b*) and (*c*), and also (*a*) and (*c*). I cannot here develop a case for maintaining that this was actually Kant's view. I merely wish to suggest that Professor Paton may perhaps have been led by his conviction that Kant was not a representative idealist to an underestimate of the importance of the doctrine that all cognition is somehow representative in character. That Kant in fact did hold this view is clear not merely from the evidence of the *Critique*, but also from his explicit statements in the *Anthropologie*. It is somewhat obscured by the translation of Vorstellung as "idea" rather than "representation," though the former has much to recommend it.

On the question of inner sense, and especially Kant's final exposition of it in § 25 of Deduction B, Professor Paton does not claim to have given a completely satisfactory account of what Kant had in mind. Perhaps no such account is possible, though I myself feel, as he does, that if I understood Kant better I should realize that the view is not as paradoxical and unplausible as it appears to me at present to be. My only criticism under this head is that Professor Paton might have made more of the psychological theory formulated by Tetens[1] and adopted by Kant in the *Anthropologie*[2], that the activity of thinking actually causes a physical modification of the cortex, and it is this modification which produces the sensuous representations which are the matter of inner as distinct from outer sense. It is also, I think, to be noted that states of feeling and willing, because of their non-representational character, are not strictly data of inner *sense* at all. Thus the *sole* content of inner sense is the representation of my own thinking activity. This would, of course, account for the difficulty which Kant finds in the Analogies of getting the phenomena which are the data of outer sense into time, which is the form of inner sense—but assuming that this was really his view, I still do not see how it could be worked out in detail.

One of the great merits of this commentary is the stress which it lays on Kant's inevitable acceptance of the mathematical and physical theories which were generally held at the time when he wrote. In the nature of the case a philosophy which is closely concerned with the scope and limits of scientific inquiry must take science as it finds it, it would therefore be absurd to expect the *Critical Philosophy*, even if it is sound in principle, to require no modification in detail in the light of such scientific developments as non-Euclidean geometry and quantum mechanics. It must, however, be remembered that Kant was far less critical in his acceptance of contemporary psychology than he was in respect of physics where his own knowledge of the subject-matter was greater. He believed that what he fairly described as the "physiology of the human understanding" could be taken as firmly established, and therefore did not consider the imperfection of a psychology derived almost entirely

[1] Tetens, *Philosophische Versuche*, I, Chapter VII, "The Ideas of Inner Sense, etc."
[2] Kant's *Menschenkunde oder philosophische Anthropologie*. Edited by Starke, 1831, p. 93. Cf. AK., Vol. VII, p. 140.

from a rather crude physiological theory of perception. It is interesting to observe that modern Gestalt Psychology, which is based on assumptions similar to those of Kant, finds much the same difficulty as he did in accounting for our apprehension of an objective time order, and I suspect that the full explanation of Kant's perplexities though not of his attempted solution of them involves a more exhaustive criticism of those assumptions than Professor Paton has given.

These, however, are clearly problems which demand further and detailed inquiry. The real contribution which Professor Paton's work makes to Kantian studies in this country is that of providing a solid foundation on which further investigation can be based, and the very full documentation which it contains fully qualifies it as the standard work on this part of Kant's philosophy. It is greatly to be hoped that the author will extend it so as to cover at least the remainder of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

T. D. Weldon.

The Thought and Character of William James: as revealed in Unpublished Correspondence, together with his Published Writings. By Ralph Barton Perry. (London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 1936. Two vols. Pp. xxxviii + 826 and xxii + 786. Price 42s. net.)

In 1920, ten years after James's death, *The Letters of William James* were published. They received wide attention; for all were interesting, some were fascinating, and the editor, James's son Henry, skilfully supplied a biographical framework that gave unity and charm to the collection. In the picture of 1920, however, the man, of set purpose, was made to dominate the philosopher, and those who wanted to see the philosopher gowned as well as gownless (to use a metaphor that may not be applicable to America) were left with a lively hope of favours to come. As the editor explained (*Letters*, I, viii): "I have not included letters that are wholly technical or polemic. Such documents belong in a study of James's philosophy, or in a history of its origin and influence. However interesting they might be to certain readers, their appropriate place is not here."

I should be conveying an entirely false impression if I suggested that Mr. Perry's ample pages in the present two volumes are a philosophical biography in the derogatory sense that they deal with their subject wholly or even primarily as a writer and thinker. James's character and personality is depicted here with loving and with leisurely care. His friends and his environment, including its changing skies, receive most adequate prominence, and although readers uninterested in philosophy would probably find it advisable to neglect a good many pages, those who have such an interest but have little technical equipment will be almost persuaded by Mr. Perry's art that they can follow the whole thing. On the other hand, Mr. Perry is certainly a philosophical biographer in the sense that he explores the origins of James's personality and attempts, in untechnical language but with great clinical acuteness, to diagnose both the benign and the morbid in James's spiritual state. Moreover, the book is philosophical in the further sense that it is by far the best account of James's philosophical and psychological views, their development, their aims, and their potencies that has yet appeared or (I should say) is ever likely to appear. Nothing is lost by the biographical form of presentation or by the choice (wherever possible) of a literary rather than of a technical vocabulary. Furthermore, James's many contacts with the Europe of his day as well as with the American continent, his polyglot

acquaintance with the antecedents of the contemporary ideas that confronted him and that he did so much to improve; in a word, his intense professional sociality, make an account of his thoughts very largely an account of the thought of his times. Mr. Perry, half incidentally, has become the historian of all philosophy at the turn of the present century with rather extensive retrospects and prospects. There are very few living writers who could have done the job half so well.

Indeed, Mr. Perry's altogether peculiar opportunities for performing this immense task are only equalled by his competence to perform it. He enjoyed James's professional esteem as well as his friendship. Thus we read in the *Letters* (II, 121) that James, in 1900, regarded Perry as "certainly the soundest, most normal all-round man of our recent production" (i.e. in Harvard), and again, in 1907, that in James's opinion (II, 295) Perry "had written far and away the most important critical remarks on pragmatism (possibly the *only* important ones)." Again, Mr. Perry has studied and re-studied James's voluminous memoranda, marginal jottings, and the like for twenty years or more, had already completed a valuable bibliography, and long ago in his *Present Philosophical Tendencies* had given an admirable short account of James's philosophy and its intellectual atmosphere. He shares James's cosmopolitanism and appreciates James's artistic interests. He is too candid and too acute to be misled by the headier pieties, and although as a writer he is not such another as James was—for he writes to be read and not to be heard—this difference, judged by the standards of good biography, is on the credit and not on the debit side.

The book has six parts, each of them large enough to form a sizeable volume by itself, and together exceeding half a million words by a considerable margin. The first part is a study in heredity. In it little is said of James's mother, "our protecting spirit, our household genius," but the father's theologico-literary gifts and electric personality are elaborately portrayed, and the radiant intellectual vivacity of the home is made abundantly plain especially as regards James's brother Henry and his sister Alice. The second part is a biography of James himself, his medical studies, his artistic projects, the Brazilian expedition, his European travels, his chequered health, the salutary influence of professional work, the range and nervous alacrity of that work, the long, intermittent assiduity required for the *Principles of Psychology* (after success had been attained the pace of this part of the book is rapidly accelerated). The remaining parts are studies in the several departments of James's philosophy. The third deals with James's early philosophical orientation, its motives and sources, its debt to American and to European contemporaries, and the like. The fourth part examines James the psychologist, the fifth considers him as a moralist and semi-theologian, the sixth deals with his long and eager researches into epistemology and metaphysics. The book closes with a balanced and beautiful appreciation of his character and temperament.

It is hard to conjecture the proper length of a review of such a book as this, important, comprehensive, and abounding in varied interest, but clearly the review would be very long indeed if the major themes of the book were discussed with an intelligible degree of minuteness. Therefore if the reader clearly understands that (in the reviewer's opinion) there is no important correlation between the length of a review and the importance of the book reviewed, no great harm will be done if the reviewer advises the reader to make his own epitome of the various high matters that the book discusses so faithfully. Accordingly (although with some compunction) I shall confine myself to a few general reflections in the rest of what I have to say.

The first part of the book seems to me to be rather longer than it need have been and to be less interesting than the rest. If it be replied that, architecturally, it would have been out of proportion had it been shorter, I should say that even architecture is not everything, and that although the first part certainly depicts James's *milieu* and has special interest for students of American letters in the last century as well as the quite special interest of the personality of James's father, the delay in coming to William James himself is a decided disadvantage. No such strictures can be levelled at the second part. Its blend of outward and inward is amazingly skilful, and its picture of a brave but mercurial spirit, eager, impatient, candid, and greedy for truth, with strong predilections very difficult to reconcile, nostalgic when abroad and restless when at home, enjoying and bringing vitality into professional routine (of the exacting American kind where varied subjects have to be offered by each University teacher in different years) yet groaning, not altogether philosophically at the steady burden of his profession, makes an ineffaceable impression. (The Appendices at the close of Vol. II, especially numbers VII and IX, are very illuminating on the professional side.)

In the other and more narrowly philosophical parts of the book I would call attention to certain special points. In the third part, the introductory chapter on "James the Empiricist" seem to me to deserve peculiarly high praise. It has brevity and point in a remarkable degree, and its attempt to show how empiricism (or the ultimate arbitrament of sensuous matter of fact) can be reconciled with the active questioning of an intellectually experimental method and also with the desire to leave room for voluntaristic belief in certain restricted spheres gives a more plausible unity to James's various aims in philosophy than many would have believed possible. The fourth part, on Psychology, is likely to arouse the widest general interest, for James's *Principles* was his only great book and will continue to be read and enjoyed long after it has become *démodé* (as it is, to some extent, even now). The fifth part is more difficult to assess. James's *Varieties* did what they were meant to do, and they still live. They were also his characteristic response (given the limitation that they were meant to be *heard*) to the science-and-religion theme of his home and upbringing. (To deflate the arrogance of science for love of science, and, where the bubble shrank, to discern the wild, the romantic, and the numinous was an integral part of his life's aim.) On the other hand, the *Varieties* was largely a *livre de circonstance*, and James's excursions into ethics, in any technical sense, do not seem to deserve much attention, although his practical talks rank very high indeed among the lay sermons of the world.

In his philosophy, I should say James, like most of his contemporaries, was more of an epistemologist than of a metaphysician. His pluralism, indeterminism, and practicalism, metaphysically speaking, are perfunctorily argued. His celebrated rejection of "consciousness" grew out of his attempt to deal concretely, in an "undesiccated" and "unsuperstitious" way, with the mind-body problem, and a large part of his essay on the subject is concerned with the status of an alleged *Bewusstsein überhaupt*. Many think, as Peirce did, that his pragmatism, metaphysically speaking, was pretty thin (but in this matter Mr. Perry's careful comparison of James's pragmatism with Peirce's and Dewey's is of great service). Again, it is not worth while inquiring whether James was or was not a realist, although Mr. Perry does his best to make such a question intelligible.

On the other hand, James's pertinacity in attacking these problems of mind and body, subject and object, concepts and percepts, neutral monism, quality, substance and relation, and the compounding of consciousness in an epistemological way (particularly in the way of a critical psychological

interrogation) had always been apparent to those who knew his work. The present volume, however, is quite invaluable for the additional light it sheds on this question, and the cumulative evidence it supplies from James's papers and marginal notes, as well as from apposite quotations from his books, is of itself a liberal education in this important aspect of an important subject.

A feature of the book is the bulk of the correspondence from and to William James, a surprising bulk in view of the fact that very little use is made of the previously published *Letters*. Since James himself (although his letters are not quite so good as those that are printed here from his brother Henry's pen) seems to have been incapable of writing dully in his correspondence, there can be no complaints as regards his extensive participation in this aspect of the book; but the book certainly contains a great deal of what other people say, and these others did not always write very well. In this direction, as I opine, Mr. Perry has had to pay a stiffish price for the utility of his book. Different types of readers will be interested in different types of correspondents. I, for instance, have read the letters of B. P. Blood and of Thomas Davidson only because I was reviewing the book, and I have no intention of re-reading them. But James's friendship with these men was part of his authentic self, and many of Mr. Perry's readers will share James's taste and not mine. For myself I would not have the correspondence with Peirce, Ward, Bradley, Shadworth Hodgson, Croom Robertson, Renouvier, or Bergson shortened by a single line, but I allow that this judgment also is in part capricious. Nevertheless, I have been a little jealous of those readers who can skip a good deal and yet keep their consciences serene.

To sum up, Mr. Perry has produced a standard work upon a great man, and in doing so has illuminated the near-contemporary philosophy of two continents. The labour involved has been prodigious, but the benefit to present and future students of philosophy is commensurate with the labour.

JOHN LAIRD.

Philosophy and History. Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer. Edited by R. KLIBANSKY and H. J. PATON. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. xii + 360. Price 25s.)

Ernst Cassirer was born in 1874. His fatherland having no further need of him, he has spent his sixtieth birthday in exile. The privilege of giving him hospitality and of collecting and publishing these *Festschriften* has fallen to this country. But only three of the contributors are British—Alexander, Stebbing, and Webb. The remaining eighteen are from Germany, Holland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and America, a far-flung cloud of witnesses to the range of Cassirer's reputation, and to its quality as well, for scholars like Brunschwicg, Gilson, Bréhier, Lévy-Bruhl, Gentile, Calogero, and Ortega y Gasset cannot be called upon to honour mediocrity. In this country Cassirer is known chiefly by his monumental history of modern epistemology (it is really much more than a history), *Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neueren Zeit* (3 vols., 1906–20), though he has recently come to our notice again through a short survey of *Die Platonische Renaissance in England und die Schule von Cambridge* (1932). Abroad he is known also as a systematic philosopher of the Marburg school, with a special interest in the philosophy of civilization. His chief systematic works are *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff* (1910) and *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* (3 vols., 1923–9). The complete bibliography appended to the volume under review reveals an impressive width of interest and

erudition, humiliating to those of us who have been educated to more modest ideals of academic competence.

The essays naturally follow Cassirer's chief interests, the history of philosophy and the philosophical approach to history, and because the latter theme, which on the whole predominates, is rarely considered in this country, the volume has for us a considerable intrinsic value. Among so many voices we would not expect unanimity, but it is striking that the names that most often come up for discussion, usually for destructive criticism, are Descartes and Hegel, the one for setting up the mathematical ideal as the type of anything that deserves to be called science, the other for his over-speculative laws of history, and both for immobilizing the movement of first-hand reality in a merely logical order of concepts. Brunschwicg dismisses the philosophy of history altogether as the "darling vice of the nineteenth century," but much of the rest of the volume tells against his addendum that "happily, it is to-day out of date." He observes, however, that the physical science which has inspired the prevailing conception of historical science has recently undergone a deep transformation by admitting into itself, through a belated clarification of the fact of irreversibility, the properly temporal aspect of time. This and other changes in the model science are noticed in several of the essays, and their bearing on the question whether history can or should be a science discussed. Most of the essayists who touch on this question agree that in historical investigation the personal factor is not only inexpugnable but indispensable, and offer various suggestions towards the justification, notwithstanding, of the objectivity of historical findings. Almost all believe that historical inquiry is or can be scientific, but in a sense different from physics, though one contributor, Herr Wind, finds several formal similarities between their respective methods. Bréhier leaves this problem in the background and instead traces the growth of the philological conscience from the seventeenth century onwards, seeing its effects not only in an insistence on detailed inquiries but also in a readiness, which he seems to share, to find in the succession of philosophies a fundamental contingency. Time scarcely receives the attention it deserves in a volume largely concerned with history. The only thorough treatment of it is in Stebbing's acute and helpful examination of McTaggart's theory. Unlike the logical positivists, with whom she is usually reckoned, she cannot bring herself to say that questions which cannot be answered should never be asked. I shall not be alone in welcoming her assurance that those of us who are incompetent really to understand the theory of relativity are not debarred from reflecting on the nature of time.

Since twenty-one essays cannot be even skimmed in a short review, I may draw special attention—the selection may be idiosyncratic—to the contributions of Calogero, Ortega y Gasset, and Alexander. Calogero's is a duel with Gentile, singularly interesting because the two have a great deal in common. Gentile's closely reasoned statement of his general position would be more acceptable if he did not make it so clear that anyone who differs from him must be utterly stupid. The Spaniard's thesis, that a human individual is not a thing or a nature but a happening, seems very like Gentile's, but is altogether different in intention, temper, and ground; the working out of it is wilful and brilliant. Alexander's summary of his own philosophy is delightful, whimsical, but sure-footed. Take a sample *obiter dictum*: "Freedom is an experience; determinism and indeterminism are theories, of which the first is verified, and the second not, by experience" (p. 18). I should add that two of the essays deal with the treatment of certain ideas of a quasi-historical character (*Veritas filia temporis* and *Et in Arcadia ego*) in the visual

arts and are freely illustrated with plates which, though half-tone, are remarkably clear.

All the foreign essays are in translation, and the several translators must be praised (if this is not impudent) for the naturalness of their versions. The editors deserve our thanks for conceiving and preparing a really unusual and valuable book, and the Warburg Institute for helping to make its publication possible. The volume should delight the great scholar to whom it is presented, and will give the rest of us considerable guidance and instruction.

T. E. Jessop.

Recent Philosophy. By John Laird. (London: Home University Library; Thornton Butterworth, Ltd. 1936. Pp. 256. Price 2s. 6d.)

It was high time that somebody undertook the task of presenting an intelligible account of recent philosophy. Professor Laird, at all times a felicitous writer, is a master of the well-turned phrase. Of the realists who were reacting from the Idealism of the Hegelian school he says, "They also showed the need for attacking philosophical problems piecemeal instead of systematically neglecting every tree in the hope of discerning some traces of an invisible wood." Admirable! But the mistake is not one into which the epitomizer of recent philosophy is likely to fall. Nobody to-day even tries to discern an invisible philosophical wood, because nobody even suspects its existence; there are only the trees, and how multitudinous they are.

Professor Laird divides them into five groups.

First, Absolutism; generally idealist, but not always, since there are followers of Marx. Within this group Professor Laird includes all the philosophies which insist that "mind is the source and principle as well as the measure of all things."

Secondly, Positivism. Knowledge of the Universe, the Positivists maintain, is to be reached by accumulating and synthesizing the results of the sciences, nor is any other sort of knowledge available. The difficulty here is, of course, as Professor Laird points out, that the sciences have themselves become "distrustful of their own finality." Increasingly their leaders, finding themselves standing upon the brink of metaphysical precipices, cry out upon the philosophers to come and save them, and he whose name is most frequently upon their lips is no positivist, but Immanuel Kant. Or in their extremity they try to turn philosopher themselves. . . .

Thirdly, there is the modern school of Analysis, also known as that of Logical Positivism. This proposes a criticism and examination of the instrument of communication, language. What, it wants to know, is the pure *form* as opposed to the content of experience: what the most generalized logical syntax? But since, as Professor Laird very properly points out, "pure form can say nothing factual about fact," the analysts are driven to make some assertion about the nature of that which the instrument of communication, however pure and general it may have become, cannot avoid communicating. In other words, they have, sooner or later, to face the question of the nature of fact, and here their predilections are empiricist and pragmatist, or, as some critics have maintained, solipsist.

Fourthly, there is the phenomenological school founded by Husserl, whose distinguishing tendency is described by Professor Laird as "the attempt to let the larger generalities speak for themselves." There are structural essences in things; there is, indeed, one such essence peculiar to each of the sciences,

and if we only attend closely enough, the essence will reveal itself to the thinker's attention. Together with Husserl, Professor Laird treats of Meinong and gives a valuable account of his philosophy including, in particular, the much misunderstood theory of subsistent objects.

Fifthly, there is Realism. This has fallen somewhat upon evil days, being to-day no longer a school of Realism so much as a company of individual realists marching out of step. We are warned, however, by Professor Laird against expecting too much of Realism. Its main purpose was epistemological; it sought to emancipate the object known from dependence on any mind or minds; it did not necessarily seek to make any statement about the nature of the object thus emancipated. Professor Laird conveys this voluntary limitation of Realism in one of his admirable phrases: "According to its own premises, epistemological realism has to go to the 'object' hat in hand. It begs for what it cannot give, the manifestation of that object as it really is. It is a permissive, not a declaratory theory, allowing the 'object' to declare itself to the mind but, for that very reason, renouncing the very idea of enforcing or instigating any particular sort of answer."

Let it be said at once that in his attempt to cover so many different fields of thought, Professor Laird has been remarkably successful. The scope and comprehensiveness of his work are wholly praiseworthy, nor can the reader resist a tribute of surprised admiration at the extent of a knowledge which seems to embrace every important work which has been written on philosophy in England, America, Germany, France, and Italy, not to speak of the smaller countries, during the last fifty years. If one were to permit oneself a criticism, it would be that Professor Laird has sought to put in too much philosophy and too many philosophers, with the result that he occasionally sacrifices clarity to comprehensiveness and assumes in his readers a knowledge that they cannot be supposed to possess. Volumes in the Home University Library are primarily intended not for the expert, but for the layman. Yet some part of what Professor Laird writes must be unintelligible to the reader not possessing a considerable prior knowledge of the subject. His sweeping surveys are at times bewilderingly allusive. What, for example, is a layman to make of the following: "Consequently there was much Teutonic influence in France, little of it Hegelian, with the exception (in some measure) of O. Hamelin's 'integral rationalism' and 'nöodicy'"? Nowhere else in the book are Hamelin and his 'nöodicy' mentioned. And unless one already knows what Moore stands for and what Husserl, what interpretation is one to place upon the following? Laird is talking of Moore's distinction between what is experienc*ed* and the act of experienc*ing*: "In other words," he says, "Moore (unlike Bradley) held that this distinction was more than relative, and (unlike Husserl) that it was more than correlative in the sense that an object, somehow, required an act, as an act, plainly, requires its object." How is the layman to tell from this passage whether the view that the "object, somehow, required an act" is Moore's or Husserl's? I hoped and believed that I knew before I read it, but now that I *have* read it I am no longer so sure. As for the laymen, I have tried reading the passage to two or three of them, but none of them could tell me what it means.

On two general matters I found Professor Laird's views exceptionally helpful. There are some who say that modern philosophy is in a quite peculiar sense bewildered; that it is in fact distracting, because it is distracted. "Nonsense," says Professor Laird in effect, "philosophy never was anything else. There never is or was a 'central tradition' in philosophy." Secondly, the root objection to technical philosophical languages is that they are so many, so difficult, and so ephemeral, that the leaders hardly have time to learn any

but their own, with the result that few of the philosophical analysts to-day know what it is that the other philosophical analysts are talking about.

C. E. M. JOAD.

An Early Draft of Locke's Essay, together with Excerpts from his Journals. Edited by R. I. AARON and JOCELYN GIBB. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. London: Humphrey Milford. Pp. xxviii + 132. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

The recent publication in 1931 by Benjamin Rand of a draft of the *Essay* written in 1671 showed that the work (finally published in England in 1690, when Locke was fifty-seven) had reached a relatively advanced stage nineteen years before it appeared. To parody Locke's language, several bulky and coherent parcels, quite neatly tied up, were ready at the earlier date, and many of these were enlarged rather than substantially altered in the later book. The fullest of them was the introductory account of innate ideas, but important sections of the second and third books of the *Essay* had been composed with care and some finish.

The present draft (in the Lovelace collection), now published for the first time, except for the opening sentences that had been quoted by Lord King, is an essential complement to the draft published by Rand. Belonging almost certainly to earlier months of the same year (1671), it gives a rapid foretaste of Books I–IV of the *Essay*, beginning with the ideas of sensation and of reflexion, and concluding with the theory of degrees of assent. In fact, it shows (what could not be inferred from Rand's draft) that Locke, in 1671, had a very adequate idea indeed of the course he had to traverse in the main argument of the *Essay*; and from the two drafts taken together we may conjecture that after the first draft was written Locke set himself to compose the prolegomena regarding innate ideas with some care and to rewrite certain small parcels of the principal argument.

This first draft pays much less attention to literary form than the second, and consequently in many ways reveals the workings of its author's mind a good deal more intimately. Its editors, by reproducing the original spelling and punctuation (apart from contractions), have deepened this impression in a fortuitous way, although they were right to print it so. They also provide an adequate introduction, and a very useful tabulated comparison of the topics treated in the two drafts and in the *Essay* itself. If I may be allowed to be churlish for a moment (when as a rather eager student of Locke I have so much cause for gratitude towards them) I should say that they tend in the ircomments to exaggerate (at least by emphasis and by selection) the extent to which Locke anticipated, and may perhaps be said in some degree to have met the criticism of later centuries; but if history, as some men appear to think, is always that portion of the past that is now alive, there is warrant even for this.

The editors also include some forty pages of excerpts from Locke's journals, and have made their book more useful and more representative by including among these excerpts some that had previously been published by Lord King. The most interesting of the excerpts, as they point out, refer to the theory of space. In the first of them (1676) Locke appears to be thinking of Hobbes's *Elements*, chap. vii, § 2. In others, he works towards the view that the pure relation of distance between two bodies does not itself contain *partes extra partes*, although it may be equated with the divisible extension of divisible bodies, and that vacuum (of the metaphysical kind) should be regarded as merely potential room. There are also characteristic discussions of the

adaptation of human inquiry to what is useful in the human state of mediocrity, a pretty full account of the theory of relations (as also in the draft), and much else that is of interest, including a very useful bibliography of Descartes and his followers, expositors, and critics. This (which is in French) would appear, from internal evidence, to have been supplied to Locke and copied by him, but it suggests that he contemplated the necessity of making a pretty thorough investigation of Cartesian views, although it is not very likely that he ever did embark, very seriously, upon that particular course of study.

JOHN LAIRD.

George Berkeley. A Study of His Life and Philosophy. By JOHN WILD, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. xi + 552. Price 6 dollars; 25s.)

This book is further evidence of the interest taken by Harvard University in Berkeley. Benjamin Rand's research, in particular his *Berkeley and Percival* and *Berkeley's American Sojourn*, is now followed by Professor Wild's book, which represents the fruit of research over a period of years. Professor Wild has made a valuable study of the Berkeley manuscripts, and prints in an appendix three hitherto unpublished sermons found among the Chapman MSS. in the British Museum. His work is an extremely thorough first-hand study, in which he has passed in review not only all Berkeley's works, but has also taken full account of the very voluminous literature on Berkeley. In this connection a word of praise is due for the admirable bibliography compiled by Professor Wild. It is by far the most complete bibliography on Berkeley hitherto published, and I have noticed only one omission, namely, G. W. Kaveeshwar's *The Metaphysics of Berkeley*.

Professor Wild's study of Berkeley's work includes interesting biographical material. He rightly points out that any account of Berkeley's intellectual development without some understanding of his life must remain as hopelessly artificial as any account of his life without some understanding of his philosophy. The "design and connection" of his works is the man himself.

The *Commonplace Book* is of course the main source of information on the genesis, evolution, and affiliation of Berkeley's thought. Begun early in 1706, the *Commonplace Book* contains a full and suggestive series of notes of what he was reading and thinking and planning during the earliest years of his philosophical development. In its vivid, disjointed and staccato jottings it reveals a mind pregnant with a great discovery. Professor Wild makes full use of the *Commonplace Book*, and throws new light on the meaning of some of the more obscure entries. He also rightly makes much use of Berkeley's letters. It is true that Berkeley did not have the qualities of the great letter-writer. Perhaps he was not sufficiently detached. His interest was always concentrated on some one scheme, and the great letter-writer must always be something of a dilettante. Berkeley's letters are rarely dull, but they cannot compare with those of Swift, of Cowper at Olney, Gray at Cambridge, or Fitzgerald at Woodbridge.

There is no doubt that the inclusion of biographical matter has greatly enhanced the value of Professor Wild's study of Berkeley's thought. He has studied life and work as a unity. This method is to my mind a much more satisfactory one than the usually adopted method of prefacing a study of a philosopher's work by a brief account of his life, and Professor Wild is to be congratulated on adopting it.

This book falls into four parts: Part I, the Revelation of the Concrete; Part II, Concrete and Abstract Reason, the Early System; Part III, Scepticism and Faith, the Emergence of the Practical; Part IV, Philosophia Prima, the "System" of the Siris.

Professor Wild gives a careful critical analysis of all Berkeley's works, and his comments are usually enlightening and helpful. In a valuable chapter on "The Meaning of Berkeley," which concludes the book, Professor Wild emphasizes the underlying spirit of Berkeley's thought. He considers that the key to Berkeley's development is his theory of abstraction, or what he has called his "concrete logic." This is the constant method which, expressing itself in the various positions through which Berkeley successively passed, holds them together as an unified structure, finally philosophically realized in the Siris. While it cannot be denied, he thinks, that Berkeley's conception of the truly real underwent the most revolutionary changes during the course of his reflections, it must, on the other hand, be granted that the goal towards which he was striving remained essentially the same. The guiding motive of Berkeley's thought, from its earliest inceptions to the last pages of the Siris, is the attempt to understand reality concretely, or to think things together as they really are.

G. A. JOHNSTON.

The Great Chain of Being. A Study of the History of an Idea. (William James Lectures, 1933.) By Professor A. O. LOVEJOY. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. xi + 382. Price $4; 17s.)

Histories of philosophy are usually so much occupied with detailed accounts of so many individual systems of philosophy and are apt to be so much concerned with emphasizing the uniqueness of these systems and justifying the attention paid to them that either there is a failure to bring out any continuity of idea or principle in the history of human speculation or else attempts are made to insist upon a continuity that is somewhat artificial in that it is dependent upon a particular reading of the connection between philosopher and philosopher. It is a refreshing and stimulating experience to come across, in Professor Lovejoy's *William James Lectures*, a method of approach not unusual to-day but not very frequent to the historical treatment of the issues dealt with by philosophers throughout the ages. Though he has to deal with individual philosophers, these and their intellectual systems are not his main concern. He singles out an idea—the idea of the Great Chain of Being, a complex of three distinguishable but historically associated ideas, the principle of plenitude (as the author names it), continuity, and gradation; and showing the genesis of this idea in Plato, traces it through the centuries down to the eighteenth, when, though it attains then its widest diffusion and acceptance, yet also meets opposition. Its history is followed with skill and very wide reading that transcends the boundaries of strict philosophy itself and penetrates into physical and biological science, theology, social organization, and the more extended field of general literature; and the discussion is supplemented with very copious notes that will help many other workers who wish to follow similar investigations. It is clear that, as the author says, the history of ideas is no subject for highly departmentalized minds.

Professor Lovejoy explicitly disclaims any intention to carry out a critical examination of the metaphysical notion in question or of its three constituent

notions. His aim is historical, and the opening chapter, in which he explains what he understands by a study of the history of ideas and what is involved in such a study, deserves well-merited attention. The historical review is a long one, but then the idea, the history of which is being investigated, is a very significant one for Western thought, has exercised a wide influence in many fields, and has had many curiously happy consequences. In fact, as the author emphasizes, without acquaintance with the idea and its history no understanding of the movement of thought in the West is possible. That history is the history of an intellectual experiment, carried on for many years, which "constitutes one of the most grandiose enterprises of the human intellect." It is the record of Western man's effort to make the world he lives in appear to his intellect a rational one. Nevertheless, the experiment ends in failure, for the more fully and the more clearly the consequences of the idea were drawn out the more numerous became the difficulties and the more untenable the view that it could sustain the belief in the rationality of the universe. The main factor in the failure is the notion of *Time*, which, from the eighteenth century onwards, has been increasingly emphasized in scientific and philosophical theory—an emphasis which since then has obscured the significance of the issue discussed. All, however, whether students of literature, of society, of science, of theology, or of metaphysics, who study this book will find their own subjects illuminated as well as gain an understanding of human history.

B. M. Laing.

The Issue in Literary Criticism. By Myron F. Brightfield. (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press. 1932. Pp. xiii + 316. Price 22s.)

Professor Brightfield's argument falls into two parts: one polemical, one constructive. In the constructive part he is trying to work out an aesthetic theory of his own, an 'empirical' one based on the principles of 'orthodox pragmatism.' In the polemical part he is engaged in controverting something which he calls idealism: primarily the idealistic theory of beauty and the literary criticism based on it, but also the general idealistic philosophy from which this is derived. The adversary is introduced on p. 30, and thereafter seldom leaves the stage. Its psychological genesis is described. Men who lack the patience and perseverance to think scientifically, men incapable of rigid self-discipline, men who allow their data to become affected by their own wishes instead of allowing the data to 'speak to them' uninterrupted—such men, including (it seems) all savages and the majority of men in every age, finding that on their own terms they cannot get what they need for the fulfilment of their wishes out of their actual environment, construct for themselves another world, an imaginary world in which all their wishes are guaranteed fulfilment. This other world will not have the distressing qualities of the real world. Lying outside the reach of experience, it can be known without taking the trouble to observe and record. Being at rest, it offers a stationary target for man's aims. Being a complete whole, it has not the fragmentary, imperfect character which always belongs to the world of experience (pp. 30, 31). The search for this extra-experiential world of wish-fulfilment is the moving force of every religion, and it has been the occupation of every philosophy from Plato to the present age (p. 32). The search has been called by various names, but we shall designate it by the name of idealism (p. 33).

Idealism (to interpolate a word of commentary) is thus not a school of

thought. It is not a type of theory to be judged by the soundness of its principles, the validity of its inferences, and the verifiable accuracy of its conclusions. It is a kind of dream, a wish-fulfilment fantasy, generated by the moral weakness, cowardice, indolence, of those who accept it. It is not a tissue of errors, it is the expression of a perverted will. Therefore it is not amenable to argument: what it demands is not refutation but castigation. Hence the author is quite consistent with his own premisses when, throughout the book, instead of criticizing 'idealist' arguments, he treats them with ridicule, innuendo, and moral indignation. Had he raised the question how 'idealists' are to be converted from their evil ways, he must have concluded that the right method is persecution in some form—how violent the form shall be, must, of course, be dictated by the gravity of the social issues at stake.

In aesthetic, 'idealism' takes the shape of a distinction between beauty, as an absolute norm or standard, and utility as something concerned with men's conduct in the world of experience. Actually, beauty and utility are the same thing: the beautiful is that which is in a state of readiness for *immediate* assimilation to an individual's wishes (p. 74), or, in other words, the beautiful, a sub-class of the useful, is the *supremely* useful (p. 75). When Kant, Schiller, Schelling, Goethe, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Croce, and others deny this doctrine, they are merely adapting to the realm of aesthetic their idealistic mumbo-jumbo (p. 306) the absolute. All this has to be swept aside and the great principle laid down (p. 103) that a beautiful work of art is one which represents a portion of the environment in the state in which the artist wishes it to be—a state of complete subservience to his desires.

It is easy to see what kind of literary criticism will proceed from this "empirical definition of art." There are three classes of literary work: (I) those expressing desires which are so inordinate that they cannot be fulfilled within the environment (p. 119): in these a state of things is described which is impossible, and the value of these (for they have a value) is that of a complete refuge from facts, for people who simply cannot face them. (II) Those expressing desires which run counter to the normal workings of the environment (p. 121); in these a state of things is described which, though possible, is improbable. These too are a drug, a refuge from reality, but not a wholly harmful drug. (III) Those expressing desires whose realization seems probable and likely (p. 122). These, the works of literature which obey probability, are the highest and most beautiful kind: they serve as a guide to life itself.

The reader is not surprised, therefore, to learn that the lowest and ugliest type of literature is the lyric, the extreme case of impossible fiction. The fact that 'idealists' hold up the lyric as the type and pattern of all that is best in art is just another proof of their perversion (pp. 254 *seqq.*). For, by every relevant test, probable fiction is proved superior to every other kind of literature (p. 156).

Literary criticism consists in applying these tests. The necessity for it clearly exists (p. 161), because there must be some expert to decide, among the various competing works of art, which are the best. The 'idealist' denies the possibility of doing this (pp. 276 *seqq.*) and, strange though the admission may seem, he is right to this extent, that impossible and improbable fiction lie almost entirely outside the range of criticism (p. 279). Thus, if we arrange literary works in a scale, with pure lyrics at one end and the ordinary modern novel or film at the other, our author claims for his own critical methods just what, I suppose, the 'idealist' would not deny for them—that they apply at the latter end of the scale but not the former. The two differ only in one point: our author regards the lyric as a drug for perverts and

neurotics, and the ordinary novel and film as mental pabulum for he-men and therefore as beautiful, while the 'idealist' regards the lyric as a serious work of art and considers the ordinary novel or film as not a work of art at all, but a mere wish-fulfilment fantasy.

Nor does our author really differ on this last point. Though he scolds the 'idealist' for regarding art as something other than economic toil, he explicitly regards it as such himself. On p. 141 he enumerates five classes of readers: (I) Those whose occupation is satisfactory but fatiguing so that they desire 'an intelligent and refined play' by way of relaxation. (II) Those whose occupation is so loathsome that they seek to escape from it as completely as possible. (III) Those who are trying to persuade themselves that it is satisfactory, and require a literature in which this is reassuringly expressed. (IV) Those who realize that it is unsatisfactory but wish to be persuaded that it may become gratifying. (V) Those whose occupation is satisfactory but leaves them still desiring new experiences, which they can obtain (perhaps we should read, imagine themselves obtaining) through literature. In every case, it will be seen, literature is a form of dope. And so most modern literature is. But it is disquieting to find an able and accomplished professor arguing that its dope-value is the only value it can ever have.

R. G. Collingwood.

What Can Philosophy Determine? Aristotelian Society. Supplementary vol. xv. (London: Harrison & Sons. 1936. Pp. 235. Price 15s. net.)

Besides the Inaugural Address of the veteran St. Andrews Professor, G F. Stout, this volume contains the Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association which was held at St. Andrews in July, and in which the Scots Philosophical Club took part. There were present at it two new professors, Mr. H. H. Price and Mr. J. N. Wright, and a new Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J. L. Stocks. Both on this account and on account of the special importance of the subject set for discussion, the papers that were read ought to be of particular interest. I think that they certainly are, but of a somewhat restricted one owing to the fact that the first four of the Symposia have little direct bearing on the question indicated in the title, but are concerned with very special and to the general reader somewhat unattractive subjects: "Memory Knowledge"; "Is there a Problem of Sense-Data?" "Are there *a priori* Truths?" "Is Existence a Predicate?" For this reason and because in any case it would be impossible within my limits to give any adequate idea of the contents of so many exceptionally able papers, including besides those already mentioned important contributions by Professors John Laird, G. E. Moore, and C. D. Broad, and others, I propose to use the space I have at my disposal to notice more particularly the last Symposium on the question "Can Philosophy determine what is Ethically and Socially Valuable?" which, besides having the advantage of bearing directly on the problem set the Meeting, is very relevant to the subject of much recent discussion in this journal.

The previous papers both in their titles and in the way in which their subjects are treated are apt to give the impression of the spread among the younger writers of a certain spirit of defeatism regarding the scope of philosophy as hitherto interpreted, and of a desire to evacuate it of much of its traditional contents. It is therefore with some curiosity that the reader turns to the last to discover how far it tends to confirm this impression.

Dr. Stocks starts with the frank acceptance of the view, stated twenty-five years ago by Bertrand Russell, of the rôle of philosophy as confined to the examination of "the hierarchy of our instinctive beliefs," and of the extent to which they may be harmonized with one another. With regard to our theoretic beliefs, instinctive or other, Dr. Stocks does not seem to rule wholly out the question of their truth or falsehood: of what *ought* to be believed as well as what *is* believed. But with regard to moral beliefs he makes it quite clear that in his view "it is the philosopher's business to find out what is thought obligatory, not what ought to be thought obligatory; what is considered good, not what it is good to consider good" (p. 194). Mr. A. K. Stout, who follows on, protests against any such limitation of the task of philosophy. As in matters of theory it has to do not only with what men actually believe but with what is believable, so in matters of practice it has to do not only with what men actually desire but with what is desirable, supporting himself by appeal to the example of the great philosophers, among them Locke to whom Dr. Stocks had appealed as on the other side. Unfortunately, he seems to treat of these two kinds of judgment as though they were on all fours with each other, not observing that in the one case we are dealing with theoretic truth, in the other with value as such. To establish his point he would have to show that philosophy has a *de jure* claim to endeavour to determine both what is true and what is of real value. Mr. W. D. Lamont is not slow to perceive this weakness, but instead of coming to his aid he goes even beyond Dr. Stocks in arguing not only that, because philosophy is a theoretical inquiry and valuations are not theoretical assertions, they necessarily fall beyond its scope (p. 226), but that valuations are not properly judgments at all, "The verbal expressions of valuations are essentially exclamatory indications of volitional attitudes" (p. 225).

This is not the place to discuss the issue which Mr. Lamont's paper has the merit of setting so clearly. I do not think that there is any greater before philosophy at the present time. But I wish to ask the Editor to allow me to put two questions, the first to Mr. Lamont as to his special argument, the other both to him and Dr. Stocks. (1) Granting what Mr. Lamont says as to value judgments being camouflaged expressions of volitional attitudes, must not the attitude be based, if not necessarily on a *judgment*, yet on a *sense* of value? and if it is (as is surely obvious to any but a convinced behaviourist) is it not putting the cart before the horse to explain the valuation by the attitude instead of the attitude by the valuation? (2) With regard to the more general argument which he accepts from Dr. Stocks that because philosophy is itself theoretical it can only deal with theory, does it really rest on anything more solid than a play of words as little convincing as that "the driver of fat oxen should be fat"? Ought we not rather to fall back on Dr. Stocks's own admirable definition of philosophy as "essentially a reflective activity of thought in contact with reality," and (seeing that reality infeasibly includes, in at least a wide range of beings, an element of valuation), ought we not to reject the limitation of reflective activity to theory as a dogma, none the less scholastic because it has originated in a modern school? It may well be true that, as Russell has insisted, it is more difficult to exclude personal bias in considering valuational sentiments (to use a neutral word), and that the standard implied in them may be more difficult to determine than in the case of existential or logical, but is that any reason why philosophers should not claim the right to do their best and to be judged by the measure of their success?

J. H. Muirhead.

The Tradition of Boethius. By HOWARD ROLLIN PATCH, Ph.D., Litt.D. (New York and London: Oxford University Press. 1936. Pp. viii + 200. Price $2.75; 10s. 6d.)

Dr. Patch, impressed by the contrast between the immense reputation enjoyed by Boethius throughout the Middle Ages and even after the Renaissance and the comparative neglect of him in modern times, has given us in this pleasantly written and charmingly illustrated book an interesting study of that author's importance in mediaeval culture. He begins by surveying the life and legend of the man who, when the tradition of classical culture was threatened with submersion by the barbarian invasions, deliberately undertook and in no small degree accomplished the invaluable task of passing on the scientific masterpieces of Greek antiquity in a Latin dress to a generation doomed, as he appears to have foreseen, to Greeklessness. The second chapter describes his influence, which was very considerable, on mediaeval thought; and here more might perhaps have been said of the part played by his theological treatises in the development of the twelfth-century school of Chartres. Recent researches, especially those of Dr. Raymond Klibansky, are revealing to us the fact that this school was less of an isolated incident in the history of Western European culture than one has sometimes been inclined to suppose; and that the writings of Thierry, and in particular his commentary on Boethius, counted for much in the transmission of what may be conveniently called a neo-Platonic tradition to such later writers as Master Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa, who have exercised an important influence on the thought of the period subsequent to the decline of that scholasticism which for a time had thrust into the background the humanism of Chartres. Finally, leaving the subject of Boethius' writings in general, and concentrating on the best known of them, the *Consolatio Philosophiae*, Dr. Patch concludes his book by an account of the numerous translations, imitations, and echoes of this famous book, which are to be found in the vernacular literatures of modern Europe.

Dr. Patch's book is indeed not free (whose is?) from occasional slips. On p. 34 one is surprised to read that Gerbert of Aurillac used, in Boethius' version, the *Topics*—that is, one would gather from the context, the *Topics* of Aristotle. Dr. Patch makes this statement on the authority of a passage in Richer's *Historiae* quoted by Mr. Osborne Taylor in his *Mediaeval Mind*: and he implies that it shows a part of the "new logic," which he rightly tells us was introduced into the curriculum of the Western schools in the twelfth century, to have been already in the hands of a scholar in the tenth. But a reference to the original passage shows that nothing is said by Richer of Aristotle's *Topics*, but only of Cicero's, which Gerbert, we are told, read with the commentary of Boethius. No Aristotelian work is mentioned beside the *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, which constituted the *Logica vetus*.

On p. 46, again, we find a misinterpretation of a remark of William of Malmesbury which, says Dr. Patch, "comes pretty close to a smile at the idea of translating Boethius at all. In Asser's time he (*sc.* William of Malmesbury) admits, one needed such a reason to interpret the text: 'in those days it was necessary, in our days ridiculous.' " But what William really says is that Asser *librum de Consolatione Philosophiae planioribus verbis elucidavit*, that is, put into an easier Latin. This is the proceeding which, according to the historian, would in his own days have been absurd. But Asser, he goes on to say, did this by King Alfred's command, in order to lighten the King's own task in translating, *ut levius ab eodem* (sc. *rege*) *in Anglicum transferretur sermonem.*

Why does Dr. Patch attribute to Plato (p. 70; cp. p. 118) the Aristotelian doctrine that it is love that moves the stars? or suggest that "sic et non" (the title of Abelard's famous treatise) means "question and answer" instead of "for and against the same proposition"? Why, again, does he (on p. 110) spoil a familiar Miltonic verse by calling Virtue "it" instead of "she"?

May the present writer mention an extremely trifling matter? His Gifford Lectures on *God and Personality* were published in 1919 not in Aberdeen (as stated pp. 134, 190)—where they were delivered—but in London, by Messrs. Allen & Unwin.

C. C. J. Webb.

Books received also:—

C. J. Bond. *Biology and the New Physics. A Plea for a Consistent Philosophy of Life.* London: H. K. Lewis & Co. 1936. Pp. 67. Cloth 2s. 6d.; Paper 1s. 6d.

A. H. Kamiat. *The Critique of Poor Reason.* New York: Privately printed. 1936. Pp. 143.

K. Hotson and J. W. Benton. *Valuation: Human and Financial.* Adelaide: The Reliance *Printery*. 1936. Pp. 52. 2s.

G. J. Cross. *Prologue and Epilogue to Hegel.* Oxford: Pen-in-Hand Publishing Co. 1935. Pp. 107. 2s. 6d.

S. C. Sopote. *Sacrifice.* Oxford: Pen-in-Hand Publishing Co. 1935. Pp. 48. 1s.

Lord Davies. *Nearing the Abyss. The Lesson of Ethiopia.* London: Constable & Co. 1936. Pp. xiii + 182. 3s. 6d.

R. G. Collingwood. *Human Nature and Human History* (Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. XXII). London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. 33. 2s.

Various. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (Ed. by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead). London: George Allen & Unwin. 1936. Pp. 375. 16s.

V. Phelips. *Concerning Progressive Revelation.* London: Watts & Co. 1936. Pp. vii + 118. 1s.

N. Kausika. *The New Evolution.* Nemmara, S. India. N. G. V. Aiyer. Publishers of the New Evolution of Man series. Pp. 171. 3s. 6d. Rs. 1.8.

E. W. Barnes (Lord Bishop of Birmingham). *Scientific Theory and Religion. The World described by Science and its Spiritual Interpretation* (Gifford Lectures, 1927–29). Cheap re-issue. Cambridge, at the University Press. 1933. Pp. xxiv + 685. 8s. 6d.

V. Purcell. *Problems of Chinese Education.* London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. 1936. Pp. viii + 261. 10s. 6d.

N. Israeli. *Abnormal Personality and Time* (Foreword: I. J. Sands; Introduction: G. Murphy). Lancaster, Pa.: Science Press Printing Co. 1936. Pp. 123. $2.50.

S. Radhakrishnan. *The World's Unborn Soul* (Inaugural Lecture, 1936). Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. 31. 2s.

W. E. Armstrong. *Saving and Investment. The Theory of Capital in a Developing Community.* London: Routledge & Sons. 1936. Pp. x+270. 12s. 6d.

J. W. Gough. *The Social Contract. A Critical Study of its Development.* Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. vii + 234. 12s. 6d.

Rt. Hon. J. C. Smuts. *Holism and Evolution.* 3rd edition. London: Macmillan & Co. 1936. Pp. xiii + 358. 12s. 6d.

E. Barker. *Education for Citizenship* (University of London Institute of Education. Studies and Reports X). London: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford. 1936. Pp. 17. 1s.

A. Lapan. *The Significance of James' Essay*. New York: Journal of Philosophy, Inc. 1936. Pp. 69. 75 cents.

R. E. M. Harding. *Towards a Law of Creative Thought* (Psyche Monographs, 7). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 1936. Pp. 178. 6s.

C. A. Strong. *A Creed for Sceptics*. London: Macmillan & Co. 1936. Pp. ix + 98. 6s.

Actes du Congrès International de Philosophie Scientifique. Sorbonne. 1935. Auteurs variés:—

I. *Philosophie Scientifique et Empirisme Logique*. Pp. 80. Fr. 12.
II. *Unité de la Science*. Pp. 76. Fr. 12.
III. *Langage et Pseudo-Problèmes*. Pp. 59. Fr. 10.
IV. *Induction et Probabilité*. Pp. 64. Fr. 10.
V. *Logique et Expérience*. Pp. 79. Fr. 12.
VI. *Philosophie des Mathématiques*. Pp. 84. Fr. 12.
VII. *Logique*. Pp. 72. Fr. 10.
VIII. *Histoire de la Logique et de la Philosophie Scientifique*. Pp. 91. Fr. 12.

Paris: Hermann & Cie. 1936.

J. Hersch. *L'Illusion Philosophique*. Paris: F. Alcan. 1936. Pp. 204. Fr. 10.

Variés. *Philosophie et Sciences* (Journées d'Etudes de la Société Thomiste). Le Saulchoir, Kain, Belgique: Société Thomiste. 1936. Pp. 210. Fr. 15.

R. Vernaux. *Les Sources cartésiennes et kantiennes de l'Idéalisme française*. Paris: Beauchesne. 1936. Pp. 528. Fr. 40.

J. Grenier. *La Philosophie de Jules Lequier*. Paris: "Les Belles Lettres." 1936. Pp. 345.

P. Angel. *Essais sur Georges Sorel* (*Vers un idéalisme constructif*). *De la notion de classe à la doctrine de la violence*. Paris: M. Rivière. 1936. Pp. 352. Fr. 15.

J. Iwanicki. *Morin et les Démonstrations Mathématiques de l'Existence de Dieu*. Paris: J. Vrin. 1936. Pp. 144.

J. Nogué. *L'Activité Primitive du Moi*. Paris: F. Alcan. 1936. Pp. 232. Fr. 20.

L. Chestov. *Kierkegaard et la Philosophie Existentielle* (*Vox clamantis in deserto*). Traduit du Russe par T. Rageot et B. de Schloezer. Paris: J. Vrin. 1936. Pp. 384. Fr. 25.

A. Mitterer. *Wandel des Weltbildes von Thomas auf heute*. Band II.; *Wesensartwandel und Artensystem der Physikalischen Korperwelt*. Bressanone: A. Weger's Buchhandlung. 1936. Pp. 227.

M. Buber. *Die Frage an den Einzelnen*. Berlin: Im Schocken Verlag. 1936. Pp. 124. Broschiert M. 2.50; Leinen M. 3.50.

E. Grisebach. *Freiheit und Zucht*. Zürich und Leipzig: Rascher Verlag. 1936 Pp. 382. M.4.

S. U. Zuidema. *De Philosophie van Occam in zijn Commentaar op de Sententiën*. Hilversum: Schipper. 1936. Pp. 533.

S. U. Zuidema. *De Philosophie van Occam in zijn Commentaar op de Sententiën*. Supplement (Citaten). Hilversum: Schipper. 1936. Pp. 399.

S. V. Rovighi. *L'Immortalità dell'anima nei Maestri Francescani del Secolo XIII*. Milano: Società Editrice "Vita e Pensiero." 1936. Pp. vii + 385. Lire venticinque.

F. Olgiati and F. Orestano. *Il Realismo*. 1936. Milano: Società Editrice "Vita e Pensiero." 1936. Pp. viii + 150. Lire cinque.

F. Mirabent. *De la Bellesa. Iniciació als Problemes de l'Estètica, Disciplina Filosòfica*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans. 1936. Pp. xvi + 307.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

Sir,

In No. 42, April 1936, of your journal, p. 230, I find an interesting review of my book *Wahrscheinlichkeitslehre*, by A. G. D. Watson. I am very much obliged to your journal and to the reviewer for the kind way my book is spoken of there, and for the profound analysis given. If I allow myself to express some criticism, this will be directed only against some details concerning the development of the discussion of the problem in Germany, as to which, it seems, the reviewer is not sufficiently informed.

Dr. Watson writes: "This work has been largely carried on under the influence of the philosophical school of Carnap, to whom the author expresses his indebtedness." This passage—which by no means may be based on an utterance from my side—reveals a deep-going misunderstanding of the development of our movement of "scientific philosophy" or "logistic empiricism," as we now call it, in Germany. This movement always concentrated round two centres and split accordingly into the Vienna Circle, whose members were Carnap, Schlick, etc., and the Berlin group in which I myself collaborated with some friends. The two groups combined later to common work, marked by the publication of the journal *Erkenntnis*, edited jointly by Carnap and myself, and by the organization of the congresses for scientific philosophy. Our collaboration was based on many common ideas; as to others, we learned from each other—but it never came to a perfect unification of ideas, the differences as to some fundamental problems being too great.

This difference neither disturbed the personal friendship between the groups, nor our collaboration. Only, whoever followed our discussions knows that just the question of probability was the point of bifurcation. Thus, I think, the idea that my theory of probability has been developed under the influence of Carnap's school not only contradicts the historical facts, but will also be rejected by my Vienna friends, who to-day hold a very different opinion on the problem. It may be added that the fundaments of my theory of knowledge and of probability were developed and published at a time when there was not yet any Vienna school at all. For a nearer exposition of these historical developments, I may refer to my article "Logistic Empiricism in Germany and the Present State of its Problems" in the *Journal of Philosophy*, March 12, 1936, p. 747.

Allow me to add some words concerning some critical remarks of the review. Dr. Watson objects that the mathematical concept of infinity used in the mathematical theory of probability does not play any rôle as to physics. This idea does not contradict my theory. In an article, "Bemerkungen zu Carl Hempels Versuch einer finitistischen Deutung des Wahrscheinlichkeitsbegriffs," *Erkenntnis*, vol. v, 1935, p. 261, I have shown that it is the concept of "practically infinite" which stands at the basis of applied probability, and that my theory is applicable for this concept as well. In another objection, Dr. Watson asks whether there may be a world for which the induction rule leads to no success, whereas other methods such as "oracles" are utilizable. This objection has also been discussed in *Erkenntnis*; I have shown there that such a separation is not possible, that if any method of prophecy exists the induction rule will always lead to the same result. This is exposed in my article "Warum ist die Anwendung der Induktionsregel für uns notwendige Begingung zur Gewinnung von Voraussagen?", *Erkenntnis*, vol. vi, 1936, p. 32. Thus the discussion in *Erkenntnis* has already clarified some objections raised, for good reasons, in the review of Dr. Watson.

Please allow me to repeat that this letter is not to criticize the excellent analysis of Dr. Watson. It is only to direct your attention to some points well known to German readers, but which, on account of the separation by language, seem to have escaped Dr. Watson's investigations.

Yours very sincerely,

Hans Reichenbach.

University of Istanbul (Turkey),
August 1936.

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INSTITUTE NOTES

SUMMARY OF PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.[1]

On November 17th Sir Herbert Samuel gave his Presidential Address to the Members of the Institute at University College, London. The title of his address was "Wars of Ideas."

Quoting from a recent utterance of the Foreign Minister of Spain, Sir Herbert said that "future wars are likely to be the conflict of two sorts of ideas, two mentalities, two different conceptions of life." "In the past," he continued, ". . . there have also been wars of ideas, e.g. the wars of the Reformation, and the wars of the sovereigns against France as propagandist of the principles of the Revolution." But on the whole, he thought, it would have seemed a generation ago as if these wars were a feature of bygone days.

At the present, however, he went on, "a possible alignment of nations to the Left and to the Right is gradually shaping itself, and it may be some event will suddenly cause that alignment to become definite, with disaster as the outcome. . . . In many countries the deep-seated and widespread unrest has assumed various forms—communist, revolutionary, anti-religious, internationalistic. This group of movements finds a philosophy ready to hand in that of Karl Marx. These evoke counter-movements and enlist powerful support. They bring together many of those who defend the principle of private property, or those who believe in a religion and are attached to a church, or those who regard a patriotic devotion to one's own country as

[1] The Address will shortly be published as an article in the *Nineteenth Century*.

a higher virtue than internationalism, and of those who simply wish to preserve stability and the existing order." This second group, he added, "if they wish for a philosophy, find it in Hegel, Fichte, Nietzsche, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Croce, Bergson. It has taken definite shape in the creeds of Fascism in Italy and of National-Socialism in Germany."

"At the basis of Fascism and National-Socialism," he suggested, "is the depreciation of intellect and the exaltation of intuition" or "what has been called the 'Retreat from Reason'." The doctrine of both is "that it is not necessary to be sensible, but only to be strong."

Moreover, "Fascism and National-Socialism are frankly militarist. . . ." With them "it is no longer an agreed matter that war is to be regarded as in itself a bad thing. Rather the philosophy of Fascism and National-Socialism raises the question whether to rid the world from war is desirable in principle."

A third distinctive mark of both National-Socialism and Fascism is in Sir Herbert's view that they accept the Hegelian conception of the State, as the 'divine idea as it exists on earth.' "Italian Fascism in its Charter of Liberty asserts that the 'Italian nation is an organism with a being, and also a means of action, superior to those of the individuals, whether separate or grouped, of which it is composed.' In other words, the individual exists for the sake of the State, not the State for the sake of the individual." And "from this theory of the nature of the State, it is no long step to the principle of personal leadership and the cult of the hero."

"On the Marxist side," again, he continued, "there is at the base the revolt against social inequality and against penury in the presence of abundance and widespread luxury. The remedy is sought in the overthrow of private ownership in land and in all the means of production; in the abolition of class distinctions; in the destruction of liberal constitutions; and in the establishment of dictatorships in the hands of the leaders of the proletariat."

"Both schools," he concluded, "adopt much the same attitude with regard to Liberty." Sir Herbert then went on to distinguish four aspects of Liberty, viz. "(1) national liberty—the freedom of one's country from foreign rule; (2) political liberty—the freedom of society from government by a despot or an oligarchy; (3) personal liberty—the freedom of the individual to think, speak, and act as he wills, subject to the equal rights of others; (4) economic liberty—freedom for the ordinary man from the restrictions imposed by poverty, overwork, bad government"; and said that whereas, "to enjoy complete liberty one must possess all four," . . . "we see in Germany and Italy and other Fascist countries on the one hand, and in Russia on the other, vast numbers of people acquiescing without demur in the sacrificing of political and personal liberty: they do it with the hope of making secure their national independence, or lessening hard economic restrictions."

Having thus outlined this new alignment of warring ideologies, Sir Herbert proceeded to a critical examination of their underlying doctrines.

"This is not the occasion," he said, "on which to attempt a discussion of the relations between intuition and reason. Both reason and intuition are of the essence of the mental activity of man, and it is unprofitable to discuss which of the two is 'the higher.' . . . There is no sense in saying that 'Reason is sovereign' . . . and there is no sense in saying that 'In the last resort we are bound to follow our intuitions.' " . . . "Intuitions in the province of morals are termed the dictates of conscience. But conscience may err. . . . Further, one man's conscience will give direction in one way, his neighbour's in the opposite." . . . "It is true, of course, that reason also may err. . . . But there is this difference between the mistakes of reason and those of

intuition. The former can be detected and remedied by the processes of reason itself. . . . Intuition does not provide for its own revision."

Turning to militarism, Sir Herbert underlined that "the contention that the principle of evolution justifies it has been refuted again and again by Scientists as well by philosophers. . . . So far from promoting the survival of the fittest, it is precisely these that war kills off. The other contention that wars are inevitable because the fighting spirit is innate in human nature is again only a reversion to the irrational."

Of the conception of the totalitarian State Sir Herbert made short work. "The State," he declared, "is nothing, after all, but a number of men and women organized for certain purposes and common action."

"To surrender political and personal liberties" would mean that we had "to hear on the radio, or to see at the theatres or cinemas only such things as authority might think suitable . . . that our country at any moment could be thrown into war, without any of us being allowed to know the truth about the issue, or being able in any degree to influence the course of events in advance." . . . Moreover, "under a dictatorship whether Fascist or Communist . . . no one is free to speak out plainly. If anyone differs from the dictator, he runs the risk of being dismissed from office, or imprisoned or killed. . . . Intrigue takes the place of open discussion and decisive vote." That this suppression of free thought would be especially a threat to religion, Sir Herbert thought was obvious.

"There remain," he said, "the respective principles of Fascism and of Communism with regard to the ownership of property." This problem, he thought, "is at bottom a question of the right division between the functions of the individual and the functions of the State or other corporate bodies. Opinion," he suggested, "seems tending to the conclusion that it is impossible to lay down any definite rule *a priori*. Many considerations have led a practical people here in Great Britain to move cautiously step by step. Different methods have been adopted to fit different cases. . . . The solution need not be found in the application universally and rigidly of a single principle, whether individualist, socialist, or communist."

In the last part of his address Sir Herbert Samuel asked the question as to "what are the broad policies that should be pursued . . . such being the great issues that confront our times?" His suggestions were briefly the following. After having uttered a warning against a tendency to pessimism, which in his view would not be justified, since "all over the world there is a marked progress in social conditions," he stressed the fact that in the first place "there is no reason to limit ourselves to a choice between Fascism and Communism. In the second place," he continued, "we may reject the political philosophy that bases itself on intuition." "In regard to education," he maintained further that "it is clearly incumbent upon the Governments of those countries which enlist the support of the mass of the people, not to allow the education of the coming generation, and not to allow military preparation and efficiency to be the monopoly of the advocates of force, nor those who are the guardians of better ideas to be content with a high-minded unpreparedness, leading to a noble-hearted defeat. If all the force in the world is to be on the side of militarism," he said, "the cause of peace would be in a bad way." "To maintain a national spirit, sane, sober, unaggressive," he added, "is not to oppose internationalism, but to complement it."

Sir Herbert summed up his speech as follows: "The policy which may after all ward off the danger of wars of ideas is, then (*a*) a searching analysis of the conflicting ideas themselves, and the exposure of what is foolish in them; (*b*) an insistence upon persuasion rather than force as the ruling

principle, and the maintenance of force sufficient to ensure that; (*c*) a sane nationalism, which should be the servant, and not the enemy, of an enlightened internationalism; (*d*) constructive measures of social progress; (*e*) finding a new inspiration in the equality of citizenship, in the achievements of science, and in a religion which (putting truth in the first place) will satisfy the spiritual emotions without offending the intellectual conscience."

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CONTENTS

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CONTENTS

PAGE

I. CULTURE, PHILOSOPHY AND FAITH: The Rt. Hon. Lord Eustace Percy, P.C. 131

II. THE STORY OF AMERICAN REALISM: Professor Wm. Pepperell Montague 140

III. CONTEMPORARY BRITISH REALISM: Professor John Laird 162

IV. HUME'S DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION: B. M. Laing, M.A., D.Litt. 175

V. NATURE, EDUCATION AND FREEDOM ACCORDING TO JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU: D. J. Allan, M.A. 191

VI. KNOWLEDGE, ACTION AND RELIGION: Canon Oliver Quick 208

VII. DISCUSSION: BOTH GOD AND MAN—A REPLY: The Archbishop of York 222

VIII. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY 224

IX. NEW BOOKS 228

X. NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY . . 249

XI. SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF AESTHETICS, AND OF SCIENCE OF ART 250

XII. INSTITUTE NOTES 253

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